23. 4. 25

John Christie
his Book Scotton
May 25th 1769

William Christie Purchased
this Book from John Christie
Callon: June 30th 1795

William Christie having died
January 5th 1852 this Book
now belongs to Robert Christie

SRS #1500

CHRIST ON HIS THRONE.

OR,

Christs Church-government briefly laid downe; and how it ought to bee set up in all Christian Congregations.

Resolved in sundry Cases of Conscience.

IER. 6.16.

Thus saith the Lord; Stand ye in the wayes, and see and aske for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall finde rest for your soules.

LVKE 19.27.

But those mine Enemies, which would not that I should raigne over them, bring them hither and slay them before me.

Printed in the yeare 1640.

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A VINDICATION OF THE Presbyteriall-Government, AND MINISTRY:

TOGETHER,

With an Exhortation, to all the Ministers, Elders, and People, within the Bounds of the Province of LONDON, whether joyning with Us, or separating from Us.

Published, By the Ministers, and Elders, met together in a Provinciall Assembly, Novemb. 2d. 1649.

Wherein, amongst other things, these ensuing particulars are contained;

1. *That there is a Church-Government, by* Divine Right.
2. *That the* Magistrate, *is not the* Fountain *of* Church-Government.
3. *That the* Presbyterial-Government, *is by* Divine Right.
4. *The* Inconveniencies *of the* Congregationall-way.
5. *That the* Ruling-Elder *is by* Divine Right.
6. *That it is the will of* Jesus Christ, *that all sorts of persons should give an account of their* Faith, *to the* Minister, *and* Elders, *before admission to the* Lords Supper; *together with* Answers, *to the usuall* Objections *made against it.*
7. Directions *to the* Elders *for the right managing of their* Office.
8. Directions *to such as are admitted to the* Lords Supper, *for the right sanctifying of* Gods Name, *in that* Ordinance, *& for their carriage one towards another.*
9. Rules *to preserve* People, *from the* Errours *of these* Times.
10. *That* Separation *from our* Churches, *is justly charged with* Schisme.
11. *That* Ministers *formerly ordained by* Bishops, *need no new* Ordination.
12. *The Necessity and usefulness of* Catechizing.

Licensed, Entred, and Printed according to Order.

London, Printed for *C. Meredith*, at the *Crane* in *Pauls* Church-yard, 1650.

IT hath been the chief ſtratagem of the adverſaries of the Church, in all Ages, to erect a throne for themſelves, in the hearts of people, by caſting reproaches and ſlanders upon the Doctrine, Government, and Godly Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt. In the old Teſtament, When the Jewes came firſt out of Babylon, and began to build the ſecond Temple of Jeruſalem, their enemies moſt falſly, and maliciouſly, ſuggeſted to King Artaxerxes, That the City of Jeruſalem, was a rebellious City, and hurtful unto Kings and Provinces, and that they had moved ſedition within the ſame, of old time, &c. And thereby cauſed the Work of the houſe of God, to ceaſe for many years. And in the New Teſtament, When the Holy Ghoſt came down from Heaven in a moſt miraculous manner, for the ſolemn inauguration of Chriſtian Religion; and When the Apoſtles were filled With the Holy Spirit, even then, they were charged to be full of new wine. And in after-times, the ſlanderous accuſations of the Heathen Idolaters, againſt the Chriſtians, are obſerved to have been one of the chiefeſt cauſes of the ten bloudy Perſecutions, raiſed up againſt them by the Romane Emperours. And this was that which forced the Godly-learned of thoſe days, to write Apologies, in defence of Chriſtians, and Chriſtian Religion. Ezra 4. 15, 24. Juſtini Martyris Apologia. Tertul. Apol.

To come neerer to our own times; when the Proteſtant Religion began to be re-eſtabliſhed (after the bloudy times of Queen Mary)

Mary) *it was loaded with so many infamous lyes, and malicious falsities, That* Reverend and learned Jewell, *was compelled to write an* Apologie *for it; for which, he will be famous in the Churches, to all Posterity. And even in our dayes, when it pleased God, out of his infinite goodness, to lay a* foundation *of a glorious* Reformation in Church-Discipline, *in this Kingdom, and to raise up the hearts of many* Godly Ministers, *and others, to contribute their utmost help for the perfecting of it, Then did a Generation of men rise up, Who made it their great design to pour out flouds of reproaches, and calumnies, upon both Government, and Ministers. First, they represent the Government unto the people, as* absolutely destructive *unto the* civill State, *to the* liberties *both of their soules and bodies, and as unsufferable in a* free Kingdom. *And then the* Ministers *that assert it, as men that seek to ingross* all power *into their own hands, as the chief* Incendiaries *of Church and State, and as the causes of all the miseries, that have of late years come upon the three Kingdoms.*

Jewell Apolog.

And therefore, We, Ministers and Elders *met together, by the Authority of Parliament, in the Provincial Assembly of the Province of* London, *considering with our selves, What way We might be serviceable in this great work of* Reformation, *have thought it our duties to wipe off those* foul aspersions, *that are cast upon it, and upon those who have been active for it; and to dispel the mists and fogs, which have so long darkened the glorious Sun-shine of this blessed Reformation.*

And because we also find, that there are many, who doubt, whether there be any particular Church-government *prescribed in the Word; and if so, whether it be the* Presbyterial, *or* Congregationall. *And others that question the lawfulness of* Ruling-Elders, *and of their joynt power, with the* Minister, *to examine those that are admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; Therefore, we have also thought it most necessary for us to search into the Word, and to deliver our judgments in all these particulars.*

And further, because we observe with grief of heart, that sin and iniquity abounds, and many separate from our Congregations, and run head-long into heretical, and soul-damning opinions; And those that do joyn with us in the Presbyterial Government

Government, *both Ministers, Elders, and People, meet with many discouragements, and may (possibly) grow faint, and weary and neglective of their duties: Therefore, We have also thought our selves obliged, to our* Vindication, *to adde an* Exhortation, *unto all Ministers, Elders, and People, within the bounds of our Province, whether joyning with us, or separating from us.*

The work (We acknowledge) is very weighty, and difficult; and the times wherein we live, are very perillous, in which men are made Offenders for a word; *Provincial Assemblies (as now constituted) are new, and strange with us, weak in power, and of no repute with many; suspected by some, as likely to prove prejudiciall to the Kingdom; and by others, to the liberty of Congregations. And the judgments and consciences of most people, are so prepossessed with prejudices and self-interest, as that we cannot but expect, that this* our first expreſſion of our selves, *will meet with much opposition, and contradiction. Some will not vouchsafe to read it; Others will read it, and contemn it; Others will mock and scoff at it. But our comfort is, the Testimony of our Consciences. That the grounds of this our present undertaking, are neither* pragmaticalneſs of spirit, *nor to* vent *our own* spleen *in aspersing others; nor* affectation of dominati*on over others; nor to blow the Trumpet to new troubles. But our ends and ayms, herein, sincerely are,* That the truths of Christ may be vindicated, the Government of the Lord Jesus advanced, the power of Godlineſs exalted, the credit of the Godly Ministry repaired, the unity of the Spirit gained, and kept in the bond of peace, That our Congregations may be purged, purity of Ordinances promoted, divisions healed, breaches made up, stumbling blocks removed; That those who stand may be established, the weak & feeble strengthened, the seduced may be converted from the errour of their wayes, and repent, to the acknowledgment of the truth; That languishing gifts and graces, may be quickened and increased; That a through Reformation (according to our solemn Covenant) may be really endeavoured; That no means of edification, may by Us be neglected; That we may keep our selves

selves pure from the bloud of all men: That the Kingdome of our Lord and Saviour may be inlarged, and God in all things glorified.

We confess, it is hardly possible, to wipe off the dirt cast upon us, but some of it will necessarily light upon those that cast it; (and it is fit, that they, that unjustly besmear others, should have their own filthiness impartially discovered) yet notwithstanding, we have purposely avoided, as much as may be, all personall reflections, and have waved the answering of some objections made against us, lest in answering to them, we should give occasion, to those that seek occasion. And We doubt not (however others may be transported with passion, or prejudice) but this endeavour of ours, which so much concerns the preservation of Religion, Truth, Godliness, and Ministry, from ruine and destruction, Will be acceptable, to all sober, and unbyassed Christians.

We shall begin with our Vindication, *and therein first assert Church-Government, by Divine Right; and then clear up the* Presbyteriall Government, *and* Ministry; *and represent them unto you, in their native colours; and afterwards proceed to our* Exhortation.

The

The VINDICATION.

THE externall Government and Discipline of *Christ*, (though it be not necessary to the being, yet it) is absolutely necessary to the well-being of a Church: So necessary, as that we cannot but be deeply affected with grief and sorrow, when we consider how long the through setling of it hath been delayed, (notwithstanding the Covenant we have taken, with hands lifted up to heaven, to endeavor a reformation in point of Discipline) and cannot but conceive it to be one chief reason of all the miseries that are now upon us; because those that have been in Authority amongst us, have laboured to build their own houses, and have suffered the house of God to lye waste. If *Nehemiah* sate down and wept, and mourned certain days, because the *wall of Jerusalem was broken down*, &c. Much more have we cause to mourn, that the *wall of Zion is not yet reared up*; for as a *City without walls, a Sea without banks, a vineyard without a hedge*, so is a Church without Discipline; and he that shall consider the multitude of Heresies and Blasphemies, the abundance of iniquities and abominations, that have crowded into the Church, whilest this wall hath been unbuilt, and this hedge unmade; cannot but take up the lamentation of *David*, though with a little difference, —— *Why hast thou suffered thy Vineyard to be without a hedge, so that all they which do passe by pluck her. The Boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild Beasts of the field devour it. Return, we be-* Psal. 80. 12, 13, 14, 15.

ſeech thee, O Lord of Hoſts; look down from Heaven, and behold and viſit this Vine, and the Vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madeſt ſtrong for thy ſelf, &c. And likewiſe to pray the prayer of the ſame Prophet in another place, *Do good in thy good pleaſure to Zion, and build thou the walls of Jeruſalem.*

Pſal. 51. 18.

The differences, we confeſs, about this wall, are very many, and ſo many, as that it would require a large Volume to treat of them; and it cannot be denyed, but theſe differences have been the great apple of ſtrife for theſe many years: And although it be our deſign (as we have ſaid) to heal and make up the breaches of this wofully divided Church, and not to widen and increaſe them; yet notwithſtanding, we cannot without prejudice to the truth, to our ſelves, and to our reſpective Congregations, but give the world ſome ſhort account of *two opinions* about Church-Government.

There are ſome, that although they have taken a *Covenant*, to endeavour the Reformation of the *Church* in Diſcipline, according to the *Word*, yet are not afraid to ſay; That there is *no particular Church-Government* ſet down in the *Word*; that the *Chriſtian Magiſtrate* is the *Fountain* of all *Church-power*, and that to aſſert a *jus divinum* of *Church-Government*, is *deſtructive* to all political Government. Now though this Opinion prevail much with *State-Divines*, and with Chriſtians that ſtudy *worldly-policy*, more then *Scripture ſimplicity*; And though it be likely (if God prevent not) to ſwallow up in a ſhort time, all other Opinions about *Church Government*: And though the aſſerting of a *jus divinum* in *Church-Diſcipline*, be with ſome men, *the only hereſie not to be tolerated*, and more hated, then the *abomination of deſolation*, ſtanding in the holy place, was by the Jews; yet notwithſtanding, we hold it our duties, eſpecially in

theſe

these times, to make it known to all our respective Congregations.

1. *That Jesus Christ, as King and Head of his Church, hath appointed a particular Government in his Church.*

2. *That the Christian Magistrate, is not the originall of Church-Government.* Which two particulars, we shall endeavour with great brevity and perspicuity, to make out unto all unprejudiced Christians. And first.

1 *That there is a particular Church-Government by divine right*: not that we think, that every *circumstance* in *Church Government* is set down precisely in the *word*, or is of *divine right* in a strict sence: But this we say, That the *substantials and essentials*, are recorded particularly in the Word by Christ, the King of his Church, and are unalterable by any State whatsoever; And that the *circumstantials* are set down under generall rules, sufficient for the ordering of them; and that therefore, even they also in a large sence may be said to be of a *divine right*. Now this we shall endeavour to prove by these ensuing Arguments.

1. *From the fulness, and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.* The *Apostle Paul* saith, that his first Epistle to *Timothy*, was written, *To teach him how to behave himself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.* And in his second Epistle he tels us; *That the holy Scriptures are able to make the man of God perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.* Now to know how to govern the Church, is one of the great works that belong to the Minister: And therefore, to say, that this is not recorded in Scripture, is to make the holy Scripture a rule *defective, and ineffectuall for the end for which it was written,* and to cast a verygreat *reproach and dishonour upon it.* And surely, if some substantiall parts of Church-Government, are expresst in the

1 Tim. 3. 15.

2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Psal. 19. 7.

Word (as few will deny) then (as we conceive) all of them of necessity must be expressed, or else the Word should not be able to attain its end; which to affirm, is no small errour: And for our parts, we cannot conceive any reason to induce us to believe, that the *Holy Ghost* should set down in the Word, some of the *substantials of Church-Goverment*, as binding and unalterable unto the end of the World, and leave other things as *substantiall* as they, *arbitrary and alterable*, according to the will and pleasure of the *Christian Magistrate*.

2. *From the excellency of the Kingly Office of Jesus Christ*; For *Christ Jesus* is the only *King* of his Church, governing it not only inwardly, and invisibly, by the working of his Spirit; but outwardly also, and visibly, as it is a visible, politicall, and ministeriall body, in which he hath appointed his own proper [a] *Ambassadors*, [b] *Assemblies*, [c] *Lawes*, [d] *Ordinances*, and [e] *Censures*, to be administred in his name, and according to his own way. As a King of this politicall and ministeriall Church, he *breathed on his Disciples, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose sins ye retain, they are retained.* As a King of this visible Church, he said unto his Apostles, *All power is given unto me in Heaven, and in Earth; Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* As a King of the same Church, he gave gifts to men, when he ascended up to heaven, *some to be Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers.* As a King, he now sits at Gods right hand, and is made Head over all things to his Church; which Church is called the house of God; and who should appoint Orders

[a] 2 Cor. 5. 20. Eph. 4. 11.
[b] Matth. 18. 20.
[c] Iam. 4. 12. Isa. 33. 22.
[d] Matth. 28. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 23. &c.
[e] 1 Cor. 5. Ioh. 20. 21, 22, 23. Matth. 28. 18, 19, 20.
Eph. 4. 11. Eph. 1. 22. 1 Tim. 3. 15.

ders for the Government of the Houſe, but the *Lord of the houſe?* And to ſay, that he hath not ordained how his houſe ſhould be governed, is to make the Maſter leſs faithfull in his own houſe, then his Servant *Moſes* was; which Church is *Chriſts Vineyard, Chriſts Garden*, and can we think Chriſt ſo negligent, as not to appoint a hedge to fence his Vineyard, and a wall to preſerve his Garden? which Church is a ſpirituall *Republique*. And ſhall we deny that to *Chriſt* in the Government of his Kingdome, which we grant unto all Earthly *Monarchs?* Shall we ſay, That Chriſt hath ordained no Laws, by which his Kingdome ſhall be governed; no Cenſures, by which his rebellious ſubjects ſhall be puniſhed; no Officers to diſpence thoſe cenſures? This is a high defamation to Jeſus Chriſt, and his *Kingly Office*.

Heb. 3.2,3. Iſa. 5.1,7. Cant. 4.16.6. 2. Eph. 2.12.

3. *From the immediate, and proper end of Church-Government*, which is not only matter of order and decency; but ſpiritual and ſupernatural, being appointed for the *Edification of the body of Chriſt in grace unto glory*; and more particularly, for the *gaining of an offending brother unto repentance, and for the ſaving of his ſoul in the day of the Lord Jeſus*. Now this is a certain rule, *whatſoever hath a ſpiritual efficacy, muſt of neceſsity have a divine originall*; *humane inſtitutions* can but produce humane effects: And therefore, ſeeing Church Government is deſigned for divine and ſupernaturall ends, it muſt of neceſſity, plead its originall from God himſelf.

Eph 4.12. Matth. 18.15. 1 Cor. 5.5. a Eph. 4.11. b 1 Tim. 5.17. 1 Cor. 12.28. and Rom. 12. 6,7,8. c Act. 6.5,6. Phil. 1.1. and 1 Tim. 3.8.

4. We argue from an enumeration of the ſubſtantials of Church-Government. The Word of God declares unto us, That there are *Church-Officers*, and who they are, *viz.* [a] *Paſtors and Teachers*, [b] *Ruling-Elders*, *and* [c] *Deacons*; And how they are to be [d] *qualified* for, and [e] *externally called* unto their reſpective Offices, toge-

d 1 Tim. 3.2. to 13. & Act. 6 3. e Act. 6.5,6. 1 Tim. 3.10. Act. 13.1,2,3. and 14.23. 1 Tim. 5.22. and 4.14.

ther

ther with all the Ministerial duties in those Offices, by them to be performed respectively; as [f] *publike prayer*, the *Ministry of the Word*, [g] *by reading and* [h] *preaching*, the [i] blessing of the people in the name of the Lord, [k] *Administration* of the *Sacraments*, [l] *Censures* and [m] distribution of Alms. The Scripture also tells us of a [n] Church, consisting of no more then can conveniently meet in one place to partake in all the Ordinances of publike Worship: and of [o] a Church consisting of divers Congregations. The Scripture also speaks of [p] Synods, with Ecclesiasticall Authority, together with the [q] subordination of the lesser, to the greater, and appeals thereunto. Now all these are the substantials of Church-Government, and are sufficiently set down in the Word, as may partly appear by the quotations in the Margent, and shall further appear by what we shall say afterwards. And more then these, and such as are necessarily included in these, are not (as we humbly conceive) substantials in the outward Government of the Church. The rest are circumstantialls, for which Christ hath given general rules sufficient to direct the Church in the ordering of them, and from which therefore she may not depart. These rules are set down, 1 Cor. 14. 26,40. *Let all things be done unto edifying, decently, and in order*, 1 Cor. 10. 31,32. *Do all to the glory of God*, &c. Rom. 14. 19. *Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace*, &c.

[f] Act. 6 4.
[g] Act. 15. 21. Act. 13. 15.
[h] Matth. 16. 19. 2 Tim. 4. 1,2.
[i] Numb. 6. 23. Luk. 24. 50. 2 Cor. 13. 14.
[k] Matth. 28. 19,20. Mat. 26. 26. to 31. 1 Cor. 11. 23.
[l] Tit. 3. 10. 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15. Mat. 18. 15. to 21. 1 Cor. 5. 3. and 2 Cor. 2. 6,7, 8,9,10.
[m] Act. 4. 35. and 6. 1,2,3. Act. 11. 29,30 Rom. 12. 8.
[n] 1 Cor. 14. 34 Rom. 16. 1.
[o] Act. 2. 41. 47. Act. 5. 4. Act. 6. 1. Act. 21. 20.
[p] Act. 15.
[q] Deut. 17. to the 12. Mat. 18. 15,16, 17,18.

The second thing, which with the like brevity and perspicuity, we shall endeavour to evidence unto you, is, *That the Christian Magistrate, is not the Fountain and Original of Church-Government.* The former assertion, gave unto *God*, the things which were *Gods*; and this doth not at all take away from *Cæsar*, the things that are *Cæsars*:

For

For we freely acknowledg, that *Magistracy* is an *Ordinance of God*, appointed for the great good of mankind; so that, whoever are enemies to *Magistracy*, are enemies to *mankind*, and [a] to the *revealed Will of God*. We desire to hold up the honour and greatness, the power and authority of lawful Magistracy, against Papists, Anabaptists, and all others, that despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. We say, that the Magistrate is, in a civil notion, the supream Governor in all causes Ecclesiastical; the [b] keeper of both tables; [c] the nursing father of the Church: [d] that it belongs to him, by his Political power, to reform the Church, when corrupted; to preserve it, when reformed; to suppresse blasphemy, idolatry, heresie, schisme, and prophaneness, and whatsoever is contrary to godliness and sound doctrine; that the people under him, may lead a quiet life, in all godliness and honesty. [e] That he is sent of God for the punishment of evil doers (amongst which, are heretiques, as well as others, and therefore called evil workers; and heresies, evil deeds, *Phil.*3.2. 2 ep. *Joh.* ver.11.) and for the praise of them that do well. That he is the * *Bishop of those things that are without the Church; as* Constantine stiled himself. That to him belongs to punish Church-Officers, with civil punishments, when they abuse their power; and to give protection to the publique exercise of Church-Government, within his dominions.

But yet, notwithstanding all this, we affirm, That though the Magistrate be a *nursing father* of the *Church*, yet he is not the *begetting father*; That the *Magistrate*, as a *Magistrate*, is no *Church-Officer*, neither are the keyes of the Kingdom of heaven committed unto him. Neither did Christ ever say to the *Kings of the Earth*; *whose sins you remit, shall be remitted*; *and whose sins you retain,*

shall

[a] 2 Pet.2.10.
[b] Deut.17.18, 19. & cap.31.9. Josh.1.7,8. 2 King.11.12.
[c] Isa.49.23.
[d] Ezr.7.26,27. 1 Pet.2.14, compared with Gal.5.19,20. & Phil 3.2. & 2 ep. Jon.10. 2 Chron.15. & 2 Chr. 17.6. 2 Chron.19.3. 2 Chron.29. 2 Chron.33. 15,16. 2 Chron.34. 31,32,33. Nehem.13.15. *ad finem.* Dan.3.29. 1 Tim.2.2. Rev. 17.16,17.
[e] 1 Pet.2.14. Rom.13.3,4.

* Ἐπίσκοπος τῶν ἔξω τῆς ἐκκλησίας, *Euseb. vit. Constant.* cap. 24.

shall be retained; and whatsoever you shall binde on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Neither is the offended brother directed to tell the civil Magistrate, but to tell the Church. Neither doth it belong to him to preach the Word, or to administer the Sacraments. Neither is he, as a Magistrate, seated by Christ in his Church, but is to be subject to the Church in all spiritual things, as a member thereof. Neither is it in his power to appoint what Government he please in the Church; no more then what Religion he please. And this we prove:

1. Because *Jesus Christ* (as hath been already shewed) hath appointed a *particular Church-Government in his Word*, to be observed by all Kingdoms and States immutably, and unalterably, for the substantials of it.

2. Because the *Church of Christ had a Government within it self for* 300 *years before it had a Christian Magistrate.* The Scripture tells us, that the Church, in the Apostles dayes, had power to meet for ordering Church-affairs, for excommunicating scandalous offenders, and obstinate heretiques. And this power was not derived to them, from the *Magistrate*, being then Heathen; nor were they Traytors and Rebels against the State, in challenging this power. And when the *Magistrate*, afterwards, became Christian, the Church did not lose that power which it had before, when he was heathen. For the truth is, when a *heathen Magistrate becomes a Christian, he doth not acquire more Authority over the Church of Christ, then he had before, no more then a heathen husband converted, doth over his wife, which he married, when unconverted.* A Magistrate, by becoming Christian, is better inabled to do service to Christ, and his right is sanctified to him; but his *Authority* is no greater then it was before.

3. Because

3. Becauſe the power of the Magiſtrate, in reference to the power of the Church, is not *privative* of the Churches power, but *cumulative* and *additional*. For if it were otherwiſe, then the condition of the Church ſhould be worſe under a *Conſtantine*, then under a *Nero*; under a *Chriſtian Magiſtrate*, then under a *Heathen*; which is contrary to all thoſe Scriptures, which tell us what glorious advantages the Church ſhould have, by the Magiſtrates becoming Chriſtian; and that the Magiſtrate ſhall bring honour and glory to the new *Jeruſalem*, and not take away that power that properly belongs to the new *Jeruſalem*. Iſa. 49.22. Pſal. 72.10,11. Iſa. 60.10. Rev. 21.24.

4. Becauſe that this aſſertion, denyeth an *intrinſecall power* to the Church, to preſerve it ſelf in unity, to purge out ſpiritual defilements, and to take care for its own preſervation againſt *Church-deſtroying enemies, and iniquities*; which makes the happineſſe of the Church wholly to depend upon the civil Magiſtrate; and is contrary, not only to the nature of the Church, but of all other *ſocieties*, which have a *power* within themſelves, of *ſelf-preſervation*; and is contrary to the experience of former ages, which tell us, *That the Church of Chriſt did flouriſh more in truth and holineſſe*, (though not in wealth and honours,) *whileſt it was under Heathen perſecuting Emperours, then afterwards*. From the Apoſtles, even unto the dregs of our time, the Church of Chriſt, both in its infancy and fuller growth, increaſed by perſecutions, and was crowned by Martyrdoms: But after it had Chriſtian Princes, indeed it was greater in power and riches, but leſſe in piety, ſaith *Jerome*. 1 Cor. 5.12.

Ab Apoſtolis uſque ad noſtri temporis fecem, Eccleſia Chriſti nata & Adulta perſecutionibus crevit, Martyriis coronata eſt; at poſtquam ad Chriſtianos Principes venit, potentiâ quidem & divitiis major, ſed virtutibus minor facta eſt. Hieron. tom. 1. in vitâ Malchi.

5. Becauſe that this opinion, *That the Magiſtrate is the Fountain of all Church-power, derives upon the Chriſtian Magiſtrate moſt of that power, which the Pope did formerly, moſt*

most unjustly and tyrannically usurp over the Churches of Jesus Christ; and thereby makes the Christian Magistrate to become a *Political Pope*, and sets up a *civil Antichrist* instead of a spiritual, for one great *part of Antichristianisme* consisteth in the Popes making himself to be the *Original of all spiritual jurisdiction.*

And thus we have given you a short account of the first opinion; and we do beseech you, in the Name of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that you would weigh what we have said, in the ballance of the Sanctuary; & that you would look upon Church-Government, as an Ordinance of God, flowing unto you in the bloud of Christ, and as part of his *Kingly Office*; That you would allow of no *Church-Officers*, or *Offices*, that have not a *divine stamp* upon them, accounting them guilty of a *spiritual Præmunire*, that will undertake an office in the Church, if there cannot be shewed a *Scripture-warrant* for it; and that you would submit unto it for conscience sake.

The second opinion, is of those, that will confesse a *particular Church-Government by divine right*; but say, that this is not the *Presbyteriall*, but the Government commonly called *Independent*, or *Congregationall*: the truth is, There are four kinds of Church-Government which lay claim to a *jus divinum*; The *Papal*, *Prelatical*, *Independent*, and *Presbyterial*. The first of them was banished out of this Kingdom, by King Hen. the 8. The second of them, as it was used and practised in this land, is abjured by our Covenant. The great debate of these late years, hath been about the *Presbyterial*, and *Independent Government*. And though we do not intend at this time, to enter into a large dispute; yet we earnestly desire our Brethren, that differ from us only in point of Church-Government, to consider the wofull mischiefs,

chiefs, that have come upon the Churches of Christ in *England*, by their dividing, and separating from us: And that whilest we have been *disputing* what is that *Government* which Christ hath appointed in his *Word*, there are a prevailing party risen up, that will have no *Government* at all to be found in the *Word*: whilest we have been so long *debating* about the *hedge*, the wild Beasts have got in, and made spoyl of the *Vineyard it self*: Whilest we have been building the wall, others have been *plucking down the house*: Whilest we have been consulting about the *Garment of Christ*, others have taken advantage to deny the *Divinity of Christ*: Whilest we have been so tediously contending about *Reforming of Churches*, *Ordination of Ministers*; and *purity of Ordinances*, there are men risen up, that deny all *Ministry*, *Ordinances*, *and Churches*. And indeed, there is scarce any fundamental Doctrine in Christian Religion, but is now, not only called in question, but openly denyed by some, or other. And therefore, we do exhort our *Brethren*, in the name of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that they would sadly lay to heart the unexpressible calamities, which are brought upon our Churches, by their dividing from us; and that they would study, for the time to come, all wayes of *Union and Accommodation*: And for our parts, we do here profess to all the World, that we are, have alwayes been, and through the grace of God, shall ever be willing to study to find out any *Scripture way*, wherein we may *unite* together with them, for the preservation of the *Truths of Jesus Christ*, for the prevention of a *toleration of Heresies and Blasphemies*, and for the healing of the great *scandal* that is given to *weak Christians*, *and wicked men*, by our unhappy *differences and divisions*.

As for the *Presbyterial Government* it self, we may just-

Act.28.22. ly say of it, as the Jews did upon another occasion, *we know that every where it is spoken against*; and that men deal with it, and Us that profess it, as the *old persecutors* dealt with the *Christians*; when they put them into *Bear-skins*, and then baited them with dogs; and as the Act. & Mon. *Papists* dealt with *John Hus*, when they *pinned a paper, with the picture of red Devils, upon his head, and then exposed him to the laughter of the people.* Some say, That it is a *lordly, Domineering government*; and that if we had our wills, we would *lord* it over the people of Christ, more then ever the *Prelates* did; and instead of one Bishop in a Diocess, we should have many hundreds. Others say, that it is a Tyrannical and cruel government, and if it were once established, it would fine and imprison all that would not yeeld to it. Others, that we require an Arbitrary power, and challenge an illimited jurisdiction. Others, that we have a design to free our selves from being under the power of the civil Magistrate. Others, that this government doth rob the Congregational Churches of their power and liberty, no lesse then Prelacy did, so that the Church in removing of Prelacy, changed not *Dominium*, but *Dominum*. Others, that we seek for *unity*, but neglect *purity*. Others accuse us, that we contend too earnestly for *purity*, because we will not admit men to the Sacrament, before they give an account to the Minister and Elders of their fitness thereunto. Others accuse us, for stamping a *jus divinum* upon our government; and others on the contrary, declaim against us, because we do not assert a *jus divinum*, but depend upon a *jus humanum*; depend more upon an *Ordinance of Parliament* for our establishment, then an *Ordinance of God*. Others exclaim against us, that we are now become the only *troublers of Israel*, and

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the only *hinderers* of a *blessed and glorious Reformation*; That we are *pestilent fellowes*, *movers of sedition among the people*, causers of the first war between *King and Parliament*, and of all the murders and blood-sheddings, that have been in the Nation for these many years; That we were the Authors and abettors of that violence that was offered to the Parliament, *July 6. 1647.* That the Ministers of *London* are Pulpit-Incendiaries, and have separated their consecrated lungs, for Bellows, to blow up the fire of a second War the last year; that they were the bringers in of that numerous Army out of *Scotland*, to invade the *Parliament* and *Army* of *England:* Others say, that we are Apostatized from our principles, and are turned *Malignants*; that we that were once the great *Parliament Assertors*, are now become the only *Parliament-Opposers*. Lastly, that the *Presbyterian Ministers* seek their own private ease and interest, and not the things of Jesus Christ; That they are notorious hypocrites, *Baals* Priests, limbs of Antichrist. And that the only reason why they dislike, and expresse an unsatisfiednesse with these times, and the alterations therein made, is, because they fear, that their great *Diana of tythes will be pulled down, and that their gains will be lesse, and their pains greater; and that they cannot lord it over their people, as they hoped to have done.*

These are the *Bear-skins* in which we are put from day to day; these are the *red Devils* that are pinned upon us, to render our persons, *Ministry*, and *Government* odious unto the people. But our comfort is, that these accusations are meer calumnies and slanders, and that there is not the least shadow of reality or truth in them. And it is an evident token to us, that *God hath some great work for us to do, because he suffers the red dragon to*

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pour out such floods of reproaches upon us; and that our *government is of Divine Original*, *because it is so much opposed*, and that by all sorts of men, and that in contrary ways: some opposing it, because it seeks so much after *purity of ordinances*; others, because it seeks it not enough: some, because it layeth claim so much to a *jus divinum*; Others, *because not enough.*

Spanhemius in a Book, called *Englands warning, by Germanies woe*; or, An Historicall Narration of the Anabaptists in *Germany*, &c.

We well remember, and are therein much comforted, what *Tertullian* saith; *That that religion must needs be good which Nero persecuted*; and what *Spanhemius that late learned Professor of Leyden*, in his history of the original, and progress of the Anabaptists of *Germany*, tells us, *That when God raised up Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, and divers other Worthies, to be the Reformers of his Church; At the same time, the enemy of mankind raised up the Anabaptists, to be the disturbers of his Church. That Thomas Muntzer their great Antesignanus, When he could not get Luther to joyn with him, but on the contrary was rebuked by him, and earnestly admonished not to disturb the publique peace, &c. He began to rise up, and thunder against Luther himself, crying out, that Luther was as much in fault; as the Pope of Rome; that it was true, the Work of reformation was somewhat furthered by him, but left still infected with much leaven; yea that Luther was worse then the Pope, for that he had published only a carnall Gospel.* And afterwards, when *Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Bullinger, Menius, Regius*, and others, began, by writing, to defend both their own, and the cause of the Church of God, and to wipe off the blot that was cast as well upon themselves as upon the Gospel, by these Anabaptists; *Muntzer* and his confederates were the more enraged against them, crying out, *That Luther, and those of his party, savoured nothing but the flesh, vaunting indeed, that they had cut off some of the leaves of Antichrist, but the tree, and the roots remained still untouched, which must also be cut down, and which cut down they would. And because they could finde nothing in the*

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written Word, to defend their errours, and the tumults which they raiſed, they fly to revelations, and inſpirations, &c. *Hereupon every Fiſh-monger begins to boaſt of the ſpirit, feign revelations after the example of Storch and Muntzer; The Pulpit is open to every Cobler or Tinker. They ſcoffed at the publique Sermons of the reformed, inveighed againſt the Lutherane Faith, as being void of good works,* &c. *Muntzer, the chiefe trumpet of theſe uprears, proclaims openly, that he was raiſed up by the command of God, for the puniſhment of wicked Princes, and altering of Politick government. His uſual ſubſcription to his letters was,* Thomas Muntzer, *the ſervant of God againſt the ungodly.* What was the fatal end of this *Muntzer*, and of *John Becold* the Taylor of *Leyden*, and of the reſt of that crew; what prodigious opinions they held, he that will, may read them in the forementioned Author. There are two reaſons have moved us to cite this ſtory: Firſt, to ſhew, *That it is not unuſual with God, when he raiſeth up men faithful in their generation to reform his Church*, to give way to the enemy of mankind, for the trial of his people, to raiſe up ſome men even amongſt the Reformers themſelves, that by ſpreading of errours and Hereſies, and State-diſturbing opinions, ſhould endeavour to obſtruct the Reformation ſo happily begun. Secondly, that in *times of Reformation*, it hath alwayes been the practice of the Ring-leaders of Errours and Hereſies, to inveigh more bitterly, and write more railingly againſt the Reformers of the Church, and the Reformation by them indeavoured, then againſt the common adverſary, both of themſelves, of the Reformers, and of the Reformation. And this is our lot and portion at this day.

But yet, nowithſtanding all this, we hope, that if this *Presbyteriall Government*, ſo much oppoſed both by *Magnants, and Sectaries of all ſorts*, were once preſented unto our congregations in its true and native colours, it would

would be embraced by all that fear God amongst us; and that we might say of it, as once it was said of *Socrates*, *That all that knew him, loved him; and the reason why any did not love him, was only because they did not know him.* And we likewise hope, that if we shall fully answer the accusations that are brought against us, in the bitter and lying pamphlets of this licentious age, that then our persons also shall stand right in the hearts and consciences of all that truly fear God within this Kingdome. Give us leave, therefore, to undertake these two things.

First, *To represent the Presbyteriall-Government before you, in its true beauty and excellency.*

Secondly, *To vindicate our persons from the slanders and cruell reproaches that are cast upon them.*

1. For the *Vindication of our Government*, and therein the undeceiving of our people, who look upon it; as it is misrepresented unto them, by those that are enemies unto Us, Them, and the Government, we shall offer briefly these ensuing particulars.

1. That the *Presbyteriall-Government*, is a Government that hath been the fruit of the prayers of many thousands of godly people in *England*, in Queen *Elizabeth*'s, and King *Iames* his dayes: There were many knowing Christians, and faithfull Ministers, that made it their frequent prayer, that God would reform *England* in Discipline, as he had done in Doctrine; and the Discipline then they prayed for, and many [a] suffered for, was the *Presbyterian*; as appears by the books written in those days. *And shall we now despise that mercy that comes swimming to us in the prayers of so many thousand Saints?*

[a] By Mr. *Carthwright*, against Archb. *Whitgift*. Mr. *Vdal*. Mr. *Hilder-sham*. Mr. *Traverse*, &c.

2. Though the Presbyterian-Government (for the practice

practice of it) be new and strange to us in *England*, yet it is not new.

First, To the Churches of Christ in other Countries: For most of those places that did thrust out the Popish Religion, and Government, did receive in the Protestant Religion, and Presbyterial Government. It is not new to the Protestant Reformed Churches in *France*, *Scotland*, *Netherlands*, and *Geneva*, and divers other places, who have had comfortable experience of this Government, and have enjoyed a great deal of liberty, verity, piety, unity, and prosperity under it: And (which we desire all our respective Congregations seriously to consider) therefore it is (as we humbly conceive) that the framers of our *National Covenant* did put in these words, *And the example of the best Reformed Churches*, into the first Article of the Covenant, that hereby they might hint unto us, what that Government was, which is neerest the Word, even that which is now practised in the best Reformed Churches.

2. *To the Word of God*; but is there to be found in all the *substantials* of it, as we have briefly shewed already, and some of our own *Brethren Ministers* of this City, have made to appear at large, in a Book, entituled, *The Divine Right of the Presbyterial Government*. We shall speak a little more to three of the forementioned *Substantials of Church-Government*: And shall prove,

1. *That the Scripture holds forth a Church, consisting of divers Congregations.*
2. *Synods with Ecclesiastical Authority.*
3. *Subordination of Congregations unto Synods, together with Appeals thereunto.*

1. *That the Scripture holds forth a Church consisting of divers Congregations.* Such a Church was

The *Church of Jerusalem*; as appears,

1. By the *Multitude of Believers*, both before, and after the dispersion (mentioned, *Act.* 8.1.) *Act.* 2.41,46,47. *Act.* 4.4. *Act.* 5.14. *Act.* 6.1,7. *Act.* 9.31. *Act.* 12.24. *Act.* 21.20.

2. By the many *Apostles*, and other *Preachers* in the *Church* of *Jerusalem*: If there were but one Congregation there, each Apostle preached but seldom, which will not consist with *Act.* 6.2.

3. The *diversity of Languages* amongst the Believers, mentioned both in the second and sixt Chapters of the *Acts*, doth argue more Congregations then one in that Church.

All which, are fully and largely handled by the *Reverend Assembly of Divines*, in a book of theirs, printed by Authority of Parliament.

2. *That the Scripture speaks of Synods with Ecclesiastical Authority*, this is evident from *Act.* 15. in which Chapter, two things are to be observed:

1. *That the Apostles in that Meeting, did not act as Apostles with infallible authority, but as Elders, in such a way as makes that Meeting, a pattern for ordinary Synods.*

For the proof of this, we offer these reasons.

1. Because *Paul* and *Barnabas* did willingly submit to be sent from *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*, which they needed not have done (one of them at least being an Apostle) nor could have done, had they acted as Apostles, and not as Members, for that time, of the *Presbytery of Antioch*, Act. 15.2.

2. Because *Paul* and *Barnabas* were sent not only to the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, but to the Apostles and Elders, which at that time were not a few (the Believers in *Jerusalem* being many thousands) which proves, that they sent not unto the *Apostles as extraordinary and infallible*

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(for then what need the advice of the Elders?) but as wise and holy Guides of the Church, who might not only relieve them by some wise counsel, but also *set a president* unto succeeding Ages, how *Errours and Dissentions* in the Church might be removed and healed; as Mr. *Cotton* observes, in his book of the *Keys*, &c. pag. 23.

3. Because in the Synod, the Apostles did not determine the thing in question, by *Apostolical Authority*, from immediate revelation, but assembled together with the Elders to consider of the matter, *Act.* 15.6. and a Multitude of the Brethren together with them, *Act.* 15. 12, 22, 23. And there the question was stated, and debated from Scripture in an ordinary way. *Peter* proves it by the *witnesse of the Spirit to his Ministry*, *in* Cornelius *his Family*: *Paul* and *Barnabas* by the like effect of their Ministry amongst the Gentiles. *James* confirmed the same by the testimony of the Prophets; with which, the whole Synod being satisfied, they determine of a judicial sentence, and of a way to publish it by letters and messages. Mr. *Cotton* of the *Keyes*.

4. Because the Decrees of the Synod are put forth in the name, *not only of the Apostles, but of the Apostles and Elders*, *Act.* 15.22, 23. *Act.* 16.4. *Act.* 21.25.

The second thing to be observed in that Chapter, is, *That the Apostles and Elders did put forth Acts of Ecclesiasticall Authority in that Synod.* This appears plainly from *Act.* 15.28. *to lay no other burden.* To bind burdens, is an *act of the binding power of the Keyes.* And it appears likewise from *Act.* 16.4. where mention is made of *Decrees ordained by the Apostles & Elders.* And it is observeable, that whersoever δόγμα, is used in the *New Testament*, it is put either for *Decrees* or *Laws*, and so frequently by the *Septuagint in the Old Testament*, as is abundantly

ly proved by the Reverend *Assembly of Divines*, in their answer to the Reasons of the Dissenting-Brethren, against the instance of the Church of *Jerusalem*, pag. 66.

3. That the Scripture holds forth a subordination of Congregations unto Synods, together with Appeals thereunto. To prove this, we will bring two places: The first is, *Deut.* 17. 8. to 12. together with 2 *Chron.* 19. 8, 10, 11. Out of which two places, compared together, we gather these two conclusions:

1. *That the Jews had two supream Judicatories in Jerusalem*; the one *Ecclesiasticall*, for the *matters of the Lord*; the other *civill*, for the *matters of the King*. This appears by *Deut.* 17. ver. 8. where we have a distinction of causes; some *forensicall* between *blood and blood*, belonging to the civil *Judicatory*; some ceremonial, between stroak, and stroak; that is, (as not only *Hierome*, but the Chaldy and Septuagint read the words, and as appears by the frequent use of the word in that sense, *Levit.* 13. and elsewhere,) between leprosie, and leprosie, belonging to the cognizance of the Ecclesiastical Judicatory. And in the 12 verse, these two Judicatories are distinguished, by the disjunctive *Or*; *And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest*, (that standeth to minister before the Lord thy God,) *or unto the Judge*, &c. This further appears, by 2 *Chr.* 19. 8, 10, 11. In which we have clear mention; first of two sorts of Judges, the *Levites and Priests, and chief of the Fathers*, vers. 8. secondly, of two sorts of causes, some *spirituall and Ecclesiasticall*, called the *judgment of the Lord*, ver. 8. and the *matters of the Lord*, ver. 11. others *civill*, as *between blood and blood*, ver. 10. And thirdly, of two *Presidents*; *Amariah* the chief *Priest*, in all *matters of the Lord*; and *Zebadiah* the Ruler of the house of *Judah*, in all the

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matters of the King. And this distinction betweenthe civil and Ecclesiastical Judicatory, is the opinion of many Orthodox & learned Authors, which are cited by Mr. *Gelaspy, Aarons* rod blossom. cap.3. pag. 8. where this conclusion is largely and learnedly debated & asserted,

2. *That there was a subordination in the Jewish Church, of the Synagogues, in all hard and difficult controversies, and in all the matters of the Lord, unto the Ecclesiastical Judicatory at* Jerusalem, *and appeals therennto*; this appears evidently, *Deut.*17.8,9. 2 Chron.19.8,10.

Now that this *Subordination*, together with *appeals*, did not belong to the *Jewish Church*, as *Jewish* only, but as it was an *Ecclesiastical Republique*, is evident. For though the *high Priest*, amongst the Jews, was *a type of Christ*, yet these *gradual Judicatories*, wherein the *aggrieved party did appeal, from the lesser to the greater*; (*that against the very light of nature, the adverse party might not be the sole Judge and party too, in his own cause*) *were not in any kind ceremonial or typicall.*

Appeals, (saith Dr. *Whitaker*,) *they are of divine and natural light, and certainly very necessary in every necessity, because of the iniquity and ignorance of Judges*, Whit. Contr.4. de Romano Pontific.lib.4. cap.2. And generally, all *Protestant Writers* against appeals to the Pope, acknowledge yet, their necessary usefulness to a *Synod*. So did that renowned Martyr *Cranmer*, the form of whose appeal to a Council, three several times urged by him, with much instance, we have recorded by Mr. *Foxe* at large, Acts and Monuments.

And indeed, if the *benefit of appeals, and consociation of Churches*, should not be as free to us, as to the *Jews*, how much *more defective & improvident* were the *Gospel*, then the *Law*, contrary to all *ancient Propheſies of Gospel-Communion?* How were *our Saviour King of Peace and Righteousnesse*, should he have ordained now under the *Gospel* such a *government*, as by making *Parties sole Judges*, were

were neither *righteous, nor peaceable?* what *Judaicall type or ceremony*, can there be in this communion and mutual assistance in government, which God (as by his Word, so) by the very light of nature, teacheth all societies whatsoever, whether Common-Wealth, Armies, Universities, or Navies? &c. as learnedly Mr. *Herle*, in his Independency, &c.

The second place is Matth. 18.15,16,17,18. which text, by a *parity of reason*, proves a *subordination of Congregations unto Synods*. For there is the same relation between *Church and Church*, as between *brother and brother*; and if a *brother* offending, is *subordinate* unto a *particular Congregation*; then by a *like reason*, an *offending Congregation* is *subordinate* unto *greater Assemblies*. And the reason of it is, because the *grounds, reasons*, and *ends* of *subordination*, are the same in both. *That God might be glorified, the offendor shamed, humbled, reduced, and sin not suffered to rest upon him. That others may be preserved from contagion, and made to fear. That scandal and pollution of the Ordinances, may be prevented, or removed.* All which argue as strongly and fully for *subordination of an offending Congregation to superiour and greater Assemblies, as of an offending brother to a particular Congregation*: And the truth is, whosoever denyes the subordination of a Congregation unto a Synod, together with appeals thereunto, doth in plain tearms affirm these three things,

1. *That the Government of Christ in his Church under the New Testament, is a Government directly contrary to the very light of nature, making the same men parties, and finall Judges in their own cause.*

2. *That the Government of the Church in the Old Testament, was more equal and just, then under the New.*

3. *That Jesus Christ hath in his Government appointed no effectual remedy to heal the scandals of an offending Congregation, or at least, a more effectual remedy to redresse an offending Brother, then an offending Congregation.* All which are great *derogations*, and *disparagements* to the *Kingly Office and Government of Jesus Christ*. And thus we have shewed that the Presbyterial Government is not new to the Word of God, as some falsly object. We proceed to justifie it in other particulars. 3. The

3. The Presbyterial Government *challengeth no power over mens bodies or estates.* It medleth not in civil affairs, or with inflicting civil mulcts, or corporal punishments. It is a government *purely spirituall*, dispensing the Keyes of the *Kingdom of heaven*, not of earth; and how then can it be cruel and tyrannical, in fineing and imprisoning mens persons, as was objected?

4. It is not a *Government* that hath *Lordships* and great *Revenues* annexed to it, as the Prelatical had. It is not *gainful* and *profitable*, but *burdensome* and *troublesome*: What do the ruling Elders gain by their office, but reproach and contempt? And is not the condition of the teaching Elder worse, in regard of maintenance, since he ingaged in this discipline, then ever it was? This is a government that hath no outward advantages to induce men to accept of it. *It is conscience*, and (as we hope) *pure conscience*, that ingageth any in it, and *therefore it is, that it hath so few friends, because there are so few that are truly conscientious.*

5. It is not a *Domineering Hierarchicall magisteriall Government, that lords it over peoples consciences, requiring subjection to the decrees of it, with blind and slavish obedience.* But it is a *Stewardship*, a *Ministry*, a painful and laborious service. We say, That all the determinations, even of Nationall Synods, are to be obeyed no further, then they agree with the Word of God. And that a Synod is *Judex judicandus.* That Congregations are to examine with the judgment of discretion, what is sent to them from Synods. There is *no more obedience required to the Decrees of a Nationall Synod, then the Independents claim to the decrees of a particular Congregation.*

6. It is not an *Arbitrary illimited Government, but*

bounded and limited: 1. *By the Word of God*; for in this Government, every thing is to be administred according to the pattern in the Mount. We desire none to follow, but where the Word goeth before. 2. *By the civill Magistrate*, in regard of the exercise of it. For we acknowledg our selves (as we have said) accountable to the civill Magistrate, to punish us with civil mulcts, if we abuse our power.

7. It is not a *Government, that doth rob and spoyl particular Congregations of their just power and priviledges, but helps and strengthens them.* For it is not (as the Prelatical was) *extrinsecall* to the severall Congregations; (which had no vote in the government, nor consent to it, but were sufferers only of it, and under it:) Neither doth it assume to it self the *sole power of Ordination and jurisdiction*: (as the Prelatical likewise did, and in this, was lordly and tyrannical over all particular Congregations in each Dioceſs:) But it is *intrinsecall to the Congregation*, consisting of the Pastors and Elders of every Congregation, governing one another by their own Officers: For we hold (which few of our Adversaries will understand or consider) *That all Congregations are equal.* No one Congregation over another. *That all Ministers are equall*, No one Minister, by divine right over another.

We hold no *Mother-Church*, on which all other Churches should depend. But our Government, so far as it is distinct from the Congregational, consisteth of *divers Sister-Churches, combined by mutuall consent, and governing one another in matters of mutuall concernment by the common agreement of Pastors and Elders*, according to that Golden Rule, *Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari debet.* In the Presbyterial Government ever

That which concerns all, must be managed by all.

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Congregation hath a voyce, by the Pastors and Elders thereof, and so is governed by a *power intrinsecall to it self, which cannot in its own nature be tyrannicall.* Though there is no power in the world so just, but by abuse may prove tyrannicall.

To illustrate this by a simile. *The Presbyterial Government is like the Government of the* City *by the* Common-councell, *wherein there are* Common-Councell-men *sent from every* Ward, *to judg and determine of matters, that concern the good of the Whole* City; *which certainly in its own nature, cannot be prejudicall to the severall* Wards, *but very helpfull and commodious; whereas the* Prelatical-Government, *Was just as if the* City *should be governed by a* High-Commission *chosen of* Forreiners; *and the* Independent-Government *is just as if every* Ward *should undertake to govern it self, divided from one another, and not at all to be under the power and authority of the* Common-councell.

Adde besides this, the *Presbyteriall-Government* doth give unto people of particular Congregations all that is by Christ left them. For,

1. We allow unto every Congregation a particular Eldership, where it may be had.

2. We impose upon no Congregation a Minister against whom they can give a rationall dissent.

3. We allow the Congregationall Eldership to judg in all matters which concern that particular Church; and to keep from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, all those whom they finde to be ignorant or scandalous.

4. In the *great Censure of Excommunication*, we say, That it ought not to be *executed against the consent of that particular Congregation, to which the party to be excommunicated belongs.* And in all other matters of importance, the Presbyterian-Government hath great respect to that Congregation which is particularly concerned therein. And therefore, it is so far from *robbing*,

that it is a great *Pillar to uphold and support Congregational Government*; as for example:

1. When a particular Congregation is destitute of a Minister, then the Neighbour-Ministers of the Classis help what in them lies to make up that defect, by sending supply in the mean time, and afterwards by joyning in the ordination of another.

2. When there is an insufficient Eldership, then the Classical Presbytery contributes light and strength.

3. When an Eldership proves Heretical, then the Classical Presbytery helps to convince them of their Heresies, which the people are not able ordinarily to do, and thereby to preserve the Congregation from spiritual contagion.

4. When any member is wronged by the Eldership, the Classis, or Synod, contributes ayd and relief, as will appear further in the next particular.

8. The Presbyterial-Government *is so far from being tyrannical, as that it is the greatest remedy against Church-tyranny, because it is as a City of refuge for all those that are oppressed in their particular Congregations, to fly unto.* For under the Congregational-Government, when a brother is (as he conceives) wronged by the major part of the Church of which he is a member, he is for ever lock't up, and hath no authoritative way to relieve himself. (Indeed, he hath moral wayes, by advice and counsel, which are altogether insufficient;) But the Presbyterian-Government is a *Zoar*, and an *Ark* for the wronged party to fly unto, from the Particular Congregation, to a Classical, Provinciall, or National Assembly. Give us leave to shew you the difference by this example: Suppose in the civil Government every Corporation should plead a *power independent* from a

Parlia-

Parliament, and challenge to be unaccountable, would not this make as many *Parliaments*, as *Corporations*? And if any member should be wronged by the major part of the Corporation to which he belongs, were he not left without remedy? And if these Corporations should cry down the *Parliaments* power over them as tyrannical, would it not be said, that this is therefore only done, that they themselves might become petty Tyrants? So is it here;

The *Congregationall Government* is a *Spirituall Corporation*, independent from all other *Ecclesiasticall Assemblies* in point of *Church-power*. As the *Pope* claims a power over all *Church-Assemblies*, so this claims an exemption from the power of all *Church-Assemblies*, and cryeth down all *Classical*, *Provinciall*, or *Nationall-Assemblies* with power, as tyrannical; but is not this, that in the mean time it may become absolute, and as it were a petty Tyranny?

There are in the Congregational Government these six great defects, besides many others which we could name.

1. There is (as hath been said) no *authoritative way to relieve a Brother oppressed by the major part of his Congregation*, which granted, would make the Government of Christ in the *New Testament*, to be inferiour to the *Jewish Government*, in which they had the liberty of Appeals. And also to be against the *light of right reason*, in making the same men to be parties and judges in their own cause, (as hath been formerly shewed.)

2. There is no *authoritative way* to heal the major part of a Congregation, when it falls into fundamental errours, which is a great disparagement to the Government of Jesus Christ, and reflects deeply upon the wis-

dome and care of the great King of his Church. *For it makes Christ to provide a more efficatious remedy to cure an erring member, (to wit, by the great Ordinance of excommunication,) then an erring Church.*

3. There is no *Authoritative way* to keep out pluralities of Religions. For if the whole *power* of Church-Government be in the *Congregation-Independently*, then let a Congregation set up what Religion they think fit, there is no *Authoritative Church-remedy* left to hinder them.

4. There is no *Authoritative way for unity and uniformity in Church-administrations*, which doth inevitably lay stumbling blocks before weak Christians, and holds them in suspence, not knowing to what Congregation to joyn, because they see such different wayes of administration of Ordinances.

5. There is no *relief when a Congregation is destitute of a Minister, in point of Ordination*; but the succeeding Minister is left to be examined and ordained by the people of the Congregation that chose him. And so also when a Congregation becomes hereticall, and in other such cases.

6. *If any of their Ministers preach out of their own Congregations, he preacheth only as a gifted brother*; neither can he, (as we conceive) according to their own Principles, administer the Sacraments out of his own Congregation, or perform any other act of office. Although we believe some of them do so, contrary to their own principles herein.

9. *That the Presbyteriall Government is a Government that tends not at all to the destruction of any, but for the good and edification of all.* There are three chief ends of the Government.

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1. *To keep the Churches of Christ in unity amongst themselves.*

2. *To keep them in purity and holinesse; it is* Christs *Fan, to purge his floor; and his Beesom to sweep out of his house every thing that offends.*

3. *To keep them in verity, it is* Christs Weeding-hook *to weed out heresies*; and therefore King *James* (though no great friend to this Government) would often say, that it was *Malleus hæreticorum*, a Hammer to beat down Heresies: And we find, that whersoever it is set up in strength, there the Churches are kept in unity, verity, and purity; and that (which is very observeable) where this Government hath once got possession, it hath for ever after kept out Popery and all Popish Innovations. The Prelatical Government with all its Lordships and Revenues annexed, as it was managed of late years in *England*, was an in-let to Popery, and it had *tantùm non* brought it in. But *wheresoever the* Presbyterian-Government *is setled, there Popery, root and branch, is plucked up and destroyed, and that without any hope of recovery.*

But it will be objected, that notwithstanding all that hath been said to render the Presbyterial Government amiable and acceptable; yet there are two great Mountains which do lye in the way which do hinder, and (as some say) will for ever hinder people from submitting unto it: The one is, *Object.*

1. *Because it sets up a new Officer in the* Church, *which is a meer humane* Creature, having no authority from the Word of God, nor was ever heard of in the Church of Christ till *Calvin*'s time, & that is the LAY-ELDER.

2. *Because it requireth all, of all sorts, to come to the* Minister *and these* Lay-Elders *to be examined, before they can be admitted to the* Sacrament *of the* Lords Supper.

We

Answer. We cannot deny, but that these two objections are great *Remora*'s to the Government, and do hinder the general receiving of it, and therefore we shall be a little the larger in answering of them.

For the first of them, we do here freely confesse, that if we were of opinion, as some are, that the Ruling-Elder hath no foundation in the Word of God, but is a meer humane Ordinanee brought into the Church only in a prudential way; we should heartily desire the utter abolition of him: For we are not ignorant, that the Ruling Prelate was brought into the Church upon the same account, for the avoiding of Schism and Division, and afterwards proved the great Author and Fomenter of Schism and Division. And if we should decline the Ruling Prelate, and take in the Ruling Elder upon the same prudential grounds, it were just with God to make him as mischievous to the Church, as ever the Ruling Prelate was: And therefore let us consider what may be said out of the Word of God, for the justification of this so much *decryed Officer:* Yet first we cannot but take notice that the name of *Lay-Elder* was affixed to this Officer by way of reproach and scorn, by the adversaries of him, and that it ought not to be continued.

Heb. 13. 17, 24. For though it be evident by Scripture, that there is a great difference betwixt the Ministry usually called the Clergy, and the people commonly called the Laity: yet its also as manifest, that the Scripture distinguisheth them not by the names of Clergy and Laity; forasmuch as all Gods people are therein stiled the Lords Clergy,

1 Pet. 5. 3. Ier. 10. 16. or Inheritance, and the Lord is called their Inheritance. And when persons are duly chosen from amongst the people to be Governours in the Church, as such, they are no longer Lay-men, but Ecclesiastical persons. And

therefore

therefore we profeſs a diſlike of the name Lay-Elder, and conceive they ought to be called either governours in the Church, 1 *Cor.*12.23. or Ruling-Elders as 1 Tim. 5.17. not becauſe their Office is to rule alone (for the Teaching-Elder is a Ruler alſo, *Heb.*13.17. 1 *Theſſ.*5. 12.) but becauſe their Office is only to rule. Now concerning theſe Ruling-Elders, we confeſs, that they are Officers ſomewhat new and ſtrange to the Church of *England*; yet not new nor ſtrange to the Word of God, nor to the Primitive times, nor (as all know) to the *Reformed Churches*.

Non quia ſoli, ſed quia ſolùm præſunt.

Firſt, they are *not new nor ſtrange to the Word of God, neither in the Old Teſtament, nor in the New.* The Jews in the *Old Teſtament*, had two ſorts of *Elders*; *Elders of the Prieſts*, and *Elders of the people*, ſuitable to our *teaching and Ruling-Elders*, as appears, *Jer.*19.1. And theſe *Elders* of the people did ſit and vote with the Prieſts and Levites in all their Eccleſiaſticall Conſiſtories, and that by divine appointment. That they were *conſtituent* members of the great *Sanhedrim*, appears, 2 *Chron.*19.8. where we reade, *That ſome of the chief of the Fathers were joyned with the Prieſts, to judge in the matters of the Lord.* And howſoever, many things among the Jews after the captivity, did decline to diſorder and confuſion; yet we finde even in the dayes of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, That the Elders of the people ſtill ſate and voyced in the Councell with the Prieſts, according to the ancient form, as is clear from *Matth.*26.57,59. *Matth.*27.1,12. *Matth.*16.21. *Matth.*21.23. *Mar.*14.43. *Luk.*22.66. and *Saravia* himſelf, who diſputeth ſo much againſt *Ruling Elders*, acknowledgeth thus much: *I finde indeed*, (ſaith he) *Elders in the Aſſembly of the Prieſts of the old Synagogue, which were not Prieſts; and their ſuffrages and authority*

De diverſ. grad. Miniſt Evang. cap.11. p. 108.

thority in all Judgments, were equal with the suffrages of the Priests. But he adds; That these Elders of the people were civill Magistrates; which is a poor shift, directly against many Scriptures, which contradistinguish these *Elders* from the civil *Magistrate*; as appears; *Act.* 4.5. *Judg.* 8.14. *Deut.* 5. 23. *Josh.* 8.33. 2 *King.* 10.15. *Ezra* 10.14. And though it were possible, that some of them might be civill Magistrates, as some *Elders* amongst Us, are Justices of the Peace: Yet they did not sit under that capacity, in the Ecclesiastical *Sanhedrim*, but as Ecclesiastical Elders.

And that the Jews also had *Elders of the people*, sitting and voting in their inferiour Consistories, appears (as we humbly conceive) from *Act.* 13. 15. *Act.* 18. 8, 17. Mar. 5. 22. In which places, we read of the Rulers of the Synagogue, who were neither Priests nor Levites, and yet were Rulers in Church-matters, and had power, together with the Priests, of casting men out of the Synagogue, and of ordering Synagogue-worship, *Joh.* 12. 42. *Act.* 13. 15.

Now this *Association* of the *Elders of the people, with the Priest, in the Jewish Church-Government, was by divine appointment*; for Moses first instituted it, and afterwards *Jehoshaphat* restored it, according as they were directed by God, Num. 11. 16. 2 Chron. 19, 8. And it did belong to the *Jewish Church*, not as it was Jewish, but as it was a Church, and therefore belongeth to the Christian Church, as well as Jewish. *For whatsoever agreeth to a Church, as a Church; agreeth to every Church.* There was nothing Judaical or typical in this institution, but it was founded upon the light of nature, and right reason, which is alike in all ages.

But leaving the Old Testament, let us consider what may

may be said for the divine right of the *Ruling-Elder*, out of the New Testament. For this purpose, we have already produced three places, which we shall now briefly open; and shew how the Ruling Elder is proved out of them. The places are, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Rom.* 12. 7, 8. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17.

The first place is, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *And God hath set some in the Church, first, Apostles; secondarily, Prophets; thirdly, Teachers; After that, Miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues;* Where we have an enumeration of sundry Officers of the Church; and amongst others, there are *Helps, Governments.* By *Helps*, are meant *Deacons*; (as not only our *Reformed* Divines, but *Chrysostome*, and *Estius*, and others observe,) and by *Governments*, are meant the *Ruling-Elder*, which that it may the better appear, we will propound, and prove these six things.

Calvin in locum Chrysostom. upon 1 Cor. 12. 28. *Estius* upon 1 Cor. 12. 28.

1. That by *Governments*, are meant *men exercising Government*, the *Abstract* put for the *Concrete*. The intent of the *Apostle*, is not to speak of *offices* distinct from *persons*, but of *persons exercising offices*. This appears first, by the beginning of the verse, *God hath set some in his Church*; this relates to persons, not unto offices. Secondly, by the 29. and 30. verses, where the Apostle speaks *concretively*, of those things which he had spoken before *abstractively*. *Are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues*, &c? and so by consequence, *Are all helpers, are all Governours?* And therefore it is, that the Syriack instead of *helps, Governments*, reads it *helpers, Governours*.

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2. That the *Governour* here meant, must needs be a *Church-Governour*; for it is expresly said, that he is seated in the Church, and therefore the civil Magistrate

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cannot be meant by this Governour, as some would have it; partly, because this is quite besides the whole intent and scope of the Chapter, treating meerly upon *spirituall Church-matters*, not at all of secular civil matters; and partly, because the Magistrate, as such, is not placed by God in the *Church*, but in the *Common-Wealth*: and partly, because the Apostle writes of such Governours, that had at that time actual existence in the Church; and neither then, nor divers hundred years after, were there any *Christian Magistrates*.

3. That this *Church-Governour* is seated by God in his Church; It is a *plant of Gods own planting*, and therefore shall stand firme, maugre all opposition. For it is expresly said, *God hath set some in his Church, first Apostles, &c. then helps, then Governments.*

4. That this Church-Governour thus seated by God in his Church, is not only a *Church-member*, but a *Church-Officer*. For though it be a question amongst the learned, whether some of the persons here named, as the *workers of miracles*, and those that had the *gift of healing, and of tongues*, were seated by God, as officers in the Church, and not rather, only as eminent members indued with these eminent gifts; yet it is most certain, that whosoever is seated by God in his Church, as a *Church-Governour*, must needs be a *Church-officer*; for the nature of the gift, doth necessarily imply an office. The Greek word for Governments, is a metaphor from *Pilots*, or *Ship-masters*, governing their ships; (hence the Master of a ship is called κυβερνήτης, a Governour, *Jam.* 3.4.) and it notes such officers, as sit at the stern of the vessel of the Church, to govern and guide it in spirituals, according to the will and mind of Christ, which is the direct office of our *Ruling-Elder*.. κυβερνήσεις.

5. This

5. This Church-Governour thus seated by God in his Church as a Church-officer, is an *ordinary and perpetuall officer in his Church.* Indeed, here is mention made of Officers extraordinary, as Apostles, Prophets; and of gifts extraordinary, as the gift of miracles, healing, and of tongues; but here is also mention made of ordinary Officers, perpetually to abide, as *Teachers, Helpers,* and the *Church-Governour, or Ruling-Elder.* And that this Officer is ordinary and perpetual, appears from the perpetual necessity of him in the Church; for a Church without government, is as a ship without a Pilot, as a Kingdom without a Magistrate, and a world without a Sun.

6. That this Church-Governour thus seated by God in his Church, as a perpetual Officer, is an officer *contradistinguished in the Text from the* Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, *and all other* Officers *in the* Church. This appears; 1. By the Apostles manner of expressing these officers in an *enumerative* form; *First, Apostles; Secondarily, Prophets; Thirdly, Teachers; After that, miracles, then gifts of healing,* &c. 2. By the recapitulation, vers. 29, 30. *Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers? Are all workers of miracles?* &c. 3. By the scope of the whole Chapter, which is to set down different gifts and offices in different subjects; It is said, ver. 8, 9. *To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledg by the same Spirit; to another, faith,* &c. And for this purpose, the Apostle draweth a simile from the members of mans body: As there are different members in mans body, and every member hath its different office, and every member stands in need one of another; the Eye cannot say to the Hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the foot,

I have no need of thee, &c. So it is in the Church ministerial, which is the body of Christ. God hath set different Officers in his Church; some ordinary and perpetual; some extraordinary and temporary: And these different Officers have different Offices, some to teach, others to distribute to the poor Saints, others to govern. Are all Teachers? are all Deacons? are all Church-Governours? and these have all need one of another. The Teacher cannot say to the Deacon, I have no need of thee; nor to the Church-Governour, I have no need of thee: But if all these Offices were in the Pastor alone, and only, then might he truly say to the Deacon and Ruling-Elder, I have no need of thee. But now God hath so set the members in his body which is his Church, that every member stands in need one of anothers help and support.

Object. If it be objected, that the Apostles had all these offices and gifts here mentioned, eminently seated in them; for they were Prophets, Teachers, Workers of Miracles; and therefore why may not all these be understood of one and the same person?

Answ. Though it be true, that the Apostles had eminently all these; yet it is as true, that there are many here named, which had but one of these gifts formally seated in them: And it is also apparent, that some of the persons here named were distinct Officers in the Church, as the Prophet, and the Teacher. Though the Apostles were Prophets and Teachers, yet the Prophet & the Teacher were Officers distinct from the Apostles; and by a parity of Reason, so were the Governors from the Apostle, Prophet, and Teacher; the scope of the Apostle being (as hath been said) to set out distinct Offices in distinct Officers: are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are

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all Teachers? The sum of what we have said from this Scripture, then, is this, *That God hath seated some men in his Church which have a gift and office to govern, which are neither Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, nor Pastors; and therefore they are Ruling-Elders*, which is the Officer which we are enquiring after.

Now this Interpretation which we have given, is not only the interpretation of Reformed Divines, both *Lutherane* and *Calvinists*, but of the ancient Fathers, and even the Papists themselves, as appears by the quotations in the Margent.

The second text is, *Rom.* 12.6,7,8. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace given, whether Prophesie, let us prophesie according to the proportion of Faith; or Ministry, let us wait on our Ministring; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation. He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity. He that ruleth, with diligence. He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.* In which words, we have a perfect enumeration of all the ordinary Offices of the Church. These offices are reduced, first, to two general heads, *Prophesie* and *Ministry*, and are therefore set down in the *Abstract*. By *Prophesie* is meant the faculty of right understanding, interpreting, and expounding the Scriptures. Ministry comprehends all other imployments in the Church. Then these generals are subdivided into the special offices contained under them, and are therefore put down in the concrete. Under *Prophesie* are contained, 1. *He that teacheth*, that is, the Doctor or Teacher. 2. *He that exhorteth*, *i.e.* the Pastor. Under *Ministry* are comprized, 1. *He that gi-*

Gerhardus de Ministerio Ecclesiastico, Calvin. *in locum*, P. Martyr. *in locum*. Beza *in locum*. Piscator *in locum*. Ambros. *in locum*. Chrys *in locum*. Salmer. *in locum*, *Septimo loco ponit gubernatores, id est, eos qui præsunt aliis, & gubernant, plebemque in officio continent. Et Ecclesia Christi habet suam politiam, & cum Pastor per se omnia præstare non posset, adjungebantur illi duo Presbyteri, de quibus dixit*, Qui bene præsunt Presbyteri, duplici honore digni habeantur, maxime qui laborant in verbo & doctrina; *Qui una cum Pastore deliberabant de Ecclesiæ cura, & instauratione; qui etiam fides atque honestæ vitæ consortes erant.*

veth, that is, the Deacon. 2. *He that ruleth*, that is, the Ruling Elder. 3. *He that sheweth mercy*, which Office pertained unto them, who in those days had care of the sick: So that in these words, we have the *Ruling-Elder* plainly set down, and *contra*-distinguished from the *teaching* and *exhorting Elder* (as appears by the distributive particles, εἴτε ὁ διδάσκων, εἴτε ὁ παρακαλῶν, *Whether he that teacheth*; *Whether he that exhorteth*; *Whether he that ruleth*, &c.) And here likewise we have the divine institution of the Ruling-Elder, for so the words hold forth. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us*; and thus also in the third verse, *according as God hath dealt to every man*, &c. This officer is the gift of Gods free grace to the Church, for the good of it.

Estius *in* Rom. 12. *Aliis placet etiam hac parte speciale quoddam charisma sive officium significari, & misereri dicatur iis qui ab Ecclesia curandis miseris, potissimum ægrotis, præfectus est, iisque præbet obsequia; velut etiam hodie fit in nosocomiis; qui sensus haudquaquam improbabilis est.*

Against this Exposition of the Text, it is objected by those that oppose the divine right of the Ruling-Elder, that the Apostle speaks, in these words, not of several offices in several persons, but of severall Gifts in one and the same person; for he saith, *having then Gifts differing according*, &c. But we answer:

1. That the word *Gift* is often in Scripture taken for *Office*; as *Eph.* 4 8, 11. *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men*; and v. 11. *He sheweth what these gifts were, some to be Apostles, some Evangelists*, &c.

2. That the Apostle in the *Protasis* speaks not of severall Gifts, but of severall Offices, and these not in the same, but in several members, *v.* 4. *As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office.* And therefore the *apodosis* must also be understood not only of *severall gifts*, but of *severall Offices*, and these in *several subjects*. And this further appears by the very similitude which the Apostle here useth, which

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is the same he used, 1 *Cor.*12. from the body natural, wherein there are many distinct members, and every member hath its distinct Office; and so it is in the Church of Christ.

3. These gifts here mentioned, and the waiting upon them, do necessarily imply an Office in whomsoever they are; and therefore they are set down emphatically with an Article, εἴτε ὁ διδάσκων ὁ προϊστάμενος. He that hath the gift of teaching, and exhorting, and ruling, and waiteth upon this gift, what is he but a Teacher, Pastor, and Ruling-Elder? And this must either be granted, or else we must open a door for all members of the Church, even women, not only to preach and teach, but to rule also, and to wait upon preaching and ruling: This truth is so clear, as that the Papists themselves being convinced of it, do say upon this text, that the Apostle here first speaks of gifts in general; and secondly, applyeth these gifts to Ecclesiastical Officers, v.6. and afterwards directs his exhortation to all Christians in general. *Cornelius a lapide*, in Rom.12.6, 7, 8.

The third text for the divine right of the *Ruling-Elder*, is, 1 *Tim.*5.17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.* For the understanding of which words, we will lay down this rule, That every text of Scripture is to be interpreted according to the literall and grammatical construction; unless it be contrary to the analogie of Faith, or the rule of Life, or the circumstances of the Text: otherwise, we shall make a nose of wax of the Scriptures, and draw *quidlibet ex quolibet.* Now according to the *Grammatical construction*, here are plainly held forth *two sorts of Elders*; the one, *onely ruling*; and the other, *also labouring in Word and Doctrine.* Give us leave to give you the true analysis of the words.

1. Here

1. Here is a *Genus*, a general, and that is *Elders*.

2. Two distinct species, or kinds of Elders, *Those that rule well*, and *those that labour in word and doctrine*; as Pastor and Doctor.

3. Here we have two participles, expressing these two kinds of Elders, *Ruling*, *Labouring*; the first do only rule, the second do also labour in Word and Doctrine.

4. Here are two distinct Articles, distinctly annexed to these two participles, οἱ προεστῶτες, οἱ κοπιῶντες. They that rule, They that labour.

5. Here is an *eminent discretive particle*, set betwixt these two kinds of Elders; these two participles, these two Articles evidently distinguishing one from the other, *viz.* μάλιστα, *especially they that labour*, &c. And whersoever this word μάλιστα is used in the New Testament, it is used, to distinguish thing from thing, or person from person; as *Gal.*6.10. *Phil.*4.22. 1 *Tim.* 5.8. 1 *Tim.*4.10. *Tit.*1.10. 2 *Tim.*4.13. 2 *Pet.*2.20. *Act.* 20.38. In all which places, the word [*especially*] is used as a discretive particle, to distinguish one thing from another, or one person from another; and therefore being applyed here to persons, must necessarily distinguish person from person, officer from officer. It is absurd to say, (saith Dr. *Whitaker*,) that this text is to be understood of one and the same Elder. If a man should say, *All the Students in the University are worthy of double honour, especially, They that are Professors of Divinity; He must necessarily understand it of two sorts of Students.* Or if a man should say, *All Gentlemen that do service for the Kingdom in their Counties, are worthy of double honour, especially they that do service in the Parliament; this must needs be understood of different persons.* We are not ignorant, that Archbishop *Whitgift*, Bishop *King*, Bishop *Bilson*, Bishop

Whitak. in prælectionibus suis, ut refert in refutatione Domami Sheervodini, cited by the Author of Altare Damascen. cap. 12. pag. 925, 926.

Biſhop *Downame*, & others, labour to faſten divers other interpretations upon theſe words, which would be over-tedious here to rehearſe. Only thus much we crave leave to ſay, which we deſire may be ſeriouſly weighed; That all other ſenſes that are given of theſe words, are either ſuch as are diſagreeing from the literall and Grammatical conſtruction, or ſuch as fall into one of theſe two abſurdities, either to maintain a *non-preaching Miniſtry*, or a *lazy-preaching Miniſtry* to deſerve double honour. Archbiſhop [a] *Whitgift* by the Elder that rules well, underſtands a Reader that is not a Preacher. [b] Dr. *King*, a Biſhop ruling, and not preaching; which is to ſay, that a non-preaching Miniſter deſerves double honour. Dr. *Bilſon* [c] ſaith, that the words are to be underſtood of two ſorts of Elders, and that the meaning is, That the Elder that rules well, and preacheth, is worthy of double honour, eſpecially they that labour, that is, *that preach abundantly*, that do κοπιῶν, labour as a Waterman at his Oar; which is as much as if he had ſaid, that a *lazy Miniſter*, or a *ſeldome-preaching Miniſter, deſerves double honour*. For all Preachers are in Scripture required κοπιᾶν, to *labour abundantly*, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 11. 1 *Cor.* 3. 8. where the ſame word is uſed that is here expreſſed. If the Apoſtle had meant to have diſtinguiſhed them by their extraordinary labour, he would rather have ſaid, μοχθοῦντες, then κοπιῶντες; for other-where he uſeth μόχθος, as a degree of painful labour, above κόπος, which is put for common labour, *Rom.* 16. 12. Dr. *Downame* and others, interpret the words of one and the ſame Elder, thus, The Elders that rule well, are worthy of double honour, eſpecially they that labour; that is, (ſay they) *eſpecially they labouring, or eſpecially becauſe they labour.* And ſo they make their labouring, to be the chief cauſe

[a] Whitgift againſt Carthwright.
[b] In a Sermon of his in print.
[c] *De perpetua Eccl. gubernat.*

2 Cor. 11. 27.
1 Theſſ. 2. 9.

of their double honour. But this interpretation is against the literal meaning, for the Greek is not εἰ κοπιῶσιν, *if they labour*, but μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες, *especially they that labour*. Here is a participle with an Article, and a *discretive particle*, which can never be rightly and literally translated *causatively*. And therefore we conclude, together with our Reformed Divines, that this text according to the proper and Grammatical construction of it, doth hold forth unto all unprejudiced Christians, a Ruling Elder, distinct from a teaching Elder, which is the thing we undertook to prove.

Beza in 1 Tim. 5. 17. Piscator in locum. Calvin. in loc.

Besides these three Scriptures thus expounded, we shall briefly offer one more; and that is, Matth. 18. 17. where the offended Brother is bid *to tell the Church*, &c. In which words, the whole power of excommunication is placed by Christ in the *Church*. The great question is, what is meant by Church? Here we take for granted: 1. That by Church, is not meant the civil Magistrate, as *Erastus* fondly imagineth; for this is utterly contrary to the purpose of Christ, and the aym of that discipline here recommended to be used, which is the *gaining of our brother unto repentance*; whereas the aym of the civil Magistrate, is not the spiritual good properly and formally of the offender, but the publique good of the Common-Wealth. And besides, it is a language unknown in Scripture, to call the Magistrate the Church; and it is an exposition purposely invented, to overthrow all Ecclesiastical government.

2. That by Church, is meant *primarily and especially* the particular Congregation; we do not say *onely*, but firstly and especially. Hence we argue; If the power of Excommunication be placed in the particular Church, then either in the Minister alone, or in the Minister

Minister and whole Congregation, or in the Minister and Elders chosen by the congregation.

But not in the Minister alone, who being but one man, can no more be called a Church, then one man can be called many, or a member called a body. For one person cannot be called a Church, (saith *Bellarmine* himself,) seeing the Church is the people and Kingdome of God. It is certain, that the Church here spoken of, is a certain number met together; for it is said, *Where two or three are gathered together*, &c.

Non enim una persona potest dici Ecclesia cum Ecclesia sit populus & Regnum Dei.

Nor in the Minister and whole Congregation; for God who is the God of order, not of confusion, hath never committed the exercise of Ecclesiasticall jurisdiction, to a promiscuous multitude; the Scripture divides a Congregation into Rulers and Saints, into Governours, and governed; and if all be Governours, who will be left to be governed? And besides, if the collective body of a Church be the Governours, then women and servants must govern as well as others.

Heb. 13. 17, 24.

And therefore we conclude, that by Church, must needs be meant, the Minister and Ruling-Elders, which are the Officers we are enquiring after.

And this is no new interpretation, but agreed unto by ancient and modern Writers. *Chrysostome* saith, by Church, is meant the προεστῶτες, *the Rulers of the Church*, Camer. *the Colledg of Presbyters*; others, the *Ecclesiasticall Senate*. These are called a Church, for four Reasons:

Chrys. upon Matth. 18.

Camer. de Ecclesia, upon Matth. 18.

1. Because it is usual in the Old Testament, (to which our Saviour here alludeth, as appears by the words Publican and Heathen,) to call the Assembly of Princes and Elders a Church, Numb. 35. 12, 24, 25. with Deut. 1. 16. 1 Chron. 13, 2, 3. with 28. 1, 2. & 29. 1, 6. Deut. 31. 28, 30. 1 King. 8. 1, 2, 55. Num. 5. 2. compared with Levit. 13. 15.

2. Becauſe they manage Church affaires in the name of Chriſt, and of the Church, and are ſervants of the Church, as well as of Chriſt.

3. Becauſe they are, as it were, the eyes and ears of the Church; and therefore as the body is ſaid to ſee or hear, when as the eyes and eares alone do ſee and hear; ſo the Church is ſaid to ſee, hear, and act, that which this *Senate Eccleſiaſticall* doth ſee, hear, and act.

4. Becauſe they repreſent the Church; and it is a common form of ſpeech, to give the name of that which is repreſented, to that which repreſents it; as we ſay, that to be done by the whole Kingdome, which is done by a full and free Parliament. Hence we might further argue:

If the Colledge of Presbyters repreſent the Church, then it muſt be made up of Ruling-Elders, as well as Miniſters. For Miniſters alone cannot repreſent the Church; the Church conſiſting not of Miniſters alone, but of Miniſters and people, who are part of the Church as well as Miniſters, and are ſo called, *Act.* 15.3,4.

This is all we ſhall ſay, for the Scriptural part.

As for the *Primitive times of the Church*, we ſhould have wholly waved the mention of any thing about them, were it not for the baſe calumnies & reproaches which the Prelatical party caſt upon the Ruling-Elder, in ſaying, That it is *the new fangled device of Calvin at Geneva*; and never known in the Church of Chriſt before his dayes. There is a Biſhop that *makes offer to forfeit his life to juſtice, and his reputation to ſhame, if any man living can ſhew, that ever there was a Ruling-Elder in the Chriſtian world, till* Farell *and* Viret *firſt created them.* But he hath been abundantly anſwered by *Smectymnuus*, inſomuch, that whereas in his Epiſcopacy by Divine Right, he boldly

Epiſcopacy by Divine right.

boldly averreth, that the name of the Elders of the Church, comprehendeth none but preachers, [a] and that therefore none but they may be called *Seniores Ecclesiæ, Elders of the Church*; though some others haply may have the title of *Seniores populi, Elders of the people*, because of their *civill Authority*. Yet notwithstanding afterward, the same Bishop in his [b] reply to *Smectymnuus* acknowledgeth, that besides *Pastors and Doctors*, and besides *Magistrates and Elders of the City*, there are to be found in Antiquity, *Seniores Ecclesiastici, Ecclesiastical Elders* also; only he alledgeth, they were but as our Church-Wardens, or rather, as our vestry-men; whereas in truth, *They were Judges in Ecclesiasticall controversies*, and did assist the Pastor in ruling and governing the Church; witnesse that famous place in [a] *Ambrose*, which testifies, *that both in the Jewish and in the Christian Church, there were these Ecclesiasticall Rulers*. This is also the judgment of [b] *Tertullian*, [c] *Origen*, [d] *Basil*, [e] *Optatus*,

[a] pag. 208, 209, 221.

[b] pag. 146.

[a] *unde & Synagoga, & postea Ecclesia Seniores habuit, quorum sine consilio nihil agebatur in Ecclesia; quod qua negligentiâ obsoleverit nescio, nisi forte Doctorum desidiâ, aut magis superbiâ, dum soli volunt aliquid viâcri*, Ambros. in 1 Tim. 5.

[b] *Præsident probati quique Seniores honorem istum non pretio sed testimonio adepti.* Tertull. Apolog. cap. 39.

[c] *Nonnulli præpositi sunt qui in vitam & mores eorum qui admittuntur inquirant, ut qui turpia committant iis communi cœtu interdicant, qui vero ab istis abhorrent, ex animo complexi meliores quotidie reddant*, Orig. lib. 3. *Contra Celsum.*

[d] Basil in Psalm 33. *Ubi quatuor gradus Ministrorum constituit, quod scilicet alii sint in Ecclesia instar oculorum, ut Seniores; alii instar linguæ, ut Pastores; alii tanquam manus, ut Diaconi, &c.*

[e] Optatus lib. 1. *adverss. Parmen.* mentioning a persecution, that did for a while scatter the Church, saith, *Erant Ecclesiæ ex auro & argento quam plurima ornamenta, nec defodere terræ, nec secum portare poterat, quare fidelibus Ecclesiæ Senioribus commendavit.* *Albaspinæus* that learned Antiquary upon that place acknowledgeth, That besides the Clergy, there were certain of the Elders of the people, men of approved life, that did tend the affaires of the Church, of whom this place is to be understood.

tatus,

f *Et nos habemus in Ecclesia Senatum nostrum, cœtum Presbyterorum; cum ergo inter cœtera etiam senes Judea perdiderit quomodo*

tatus, f *Hierome*, g *Augustine*, h *Gregory* the great, and divers others cited by *Fuitellus* in his Annotations in *Can. Eccl. Africanæ*, and by *Voetius*, and by *Smectymnuus*, and by the Author of the *Assertion of the Scotch Discipline*, some of which are rehearsed in the Margent. We will conclude this Discourse, with the confession of Archbishop *Whitgift*, a great Writer against the Presbyterial-Government; *I know (saith he) that in the Primitive Church, they had in every Church Seniors, to whom the Government of the Church was committed, but that was before there was any Christian Prince or Magistrate.*

And therefore, let not our respective Congregations suffer themselves to be abused any longer with a false

potest habere concilium, quod proprie Seniorum est? Hier. *in* Is. 3. 2.

g Aug. writing in his 137. Epistle to those of his own Church, directs his Epistle, *Dilectissimis Patribus, Clero, senioribus, & universæ plebi Ecclesiæ Hipponensis.*

So again. Aug. lib. 3. *contra Cresconium*, cap. 56. *Peregrinus Presbyter, & Seniores Ecclesiæ Mausicanæ regionis.*

Again, Sermo. 19. *de verbis Domini. Cum ob errorem aliquem a Senioribus arguuntur, & imputantur alicui de illis, cur ebrius fuerit?* &c.

Again, *Epistola Synodalis Concilii Carbarsussitani apud eundem*, Aug. *enar. in* Psalm 36. *Necesse nos fuerit Primiani causam quem plebs sancta Carthaginensis Ecclesiæ Episcopum fuerat in oculis Dei sortita, Seniorum literis ejusdem Ecclesiæ postulantibus audire atque discutere.*

h Gregor. Magnus, *lib.* 11. *ep.* 19. *Si quid de quocunque Clerico ad aures tuas pervenerit, quod te juste possit offendere, facile non credas, sed præsentibus Ecclesiæ tuæ Senioribus diligenter est perscrutanda veritas, & tunc si qualitas rei poposcet, Canonica districtio culpam feriat delinquentis.* We should have added before, that *in actis purgationis Cæciliani & Felicis*; We read *Episcopi Presbyteri, Diaconi, Seniores.* Again, *Clerici & Seniores Cirthensium.* Sundry Letters were produced and read in the conference: one directed, *Clero & Senioribus*: another, *Clericis & Senioribus.* The Letter of *Purpurius* to *Sylvanus*, speaketh thus, *Adhibete conclericos, & Seniores plebis Ecclesiasticos viros, & inquirant diligenter quæ sint istæ dissensiones.*

belief,

belief, that the *Ruling-Elder* is a new device, and an *Officer* never known in the *Church of God*, nor *Word of God*. For we have sufficiently (as we conceive) proved it to be warranted by the Word, and to have been of use in the purer times of the Church.

Three things we shall desire to adde, as a conclusion of this discourse.

1. *That there are prints of the Ruling-Elder remaining amongst us even at this day*; for as the *Overseers* of every Parish, have a *resemblance of the Deacon*; so the *Churchwarden* hath some *foot-steps* of our *Ruling-Elder*; though we must needs confess, that this *Office hath been much abused*; and we could desire it might be laid aside, and the true *Scripture-Ruling-Elder* set up in his place.

2. That the Prelatical Divines, g which are such great adversaries to the *Ruling-Elder*, do yet notwithstanding, hold and prove, that men of abilities which are not Ministers, are to be admitted into *Generall Councels*; because that in the Synod of *Jerusalem*, not only the *Apostles*, but *Elders* and *Brethren* did sit and vote, because this was practised in the *Old Testament*; and because that this was practised in the Councels held afterwards in the Church of Christ, as appears out of *Eusebius*, *Sozomen*, and *Theodoret*, and by the subscriptions of those Councels done by men, not Ministers, as well as others.

Hence we might argue;

If other men, besides Ministers, are by Gods word, even in the judgment of the Prelaticall Divines, to be admitted into the greatest Assemblies, and Councels of the Church, much more are they by the same right to be admitted into particular Congregations, to sit and vote with the Minister in the Government of the Church.

g Sutlivius *de Concil. ab 1. cap.* 8. saith, that among the Jews *Seniores tribuum*, the Elders of the Tribes did sit with the Priests in judging controversies of the Law of God. Hence he argues against *Bellarmine*, that so it ought to be in the christian Church also, because the privilege of christians is no less then the privilege of the Jewes.

3. Adde

3. Adde thirdly, that even in the Bishops days, for these many hundred years, there have been *Ruling-Elders* in the Church; for the *Chancellours*, *Commissaries*, *Officials*, and such others, were all of them *Governours of the Church*, and had the *power of suspension and excommunication*; and yet were few of them, if any, *Ministers of the Word*: And it seems to us, to be a great *curse of God*, that lyeth upon mens spirits, that could willingly submit to *Chancellours* & *Commissaries*, who did nothing else but *pick their purses, and tyrannize over their bodies and estates*, and yet will not submit unto the *Ruling-Elder* now established, who *seeks no other interest, but the interest of Christ, and medleth not with mens bodies or estates, and desireth nothing but to be helpfull to the Ministers of Christ, to keep their Congregations in unity, piety, and verity*. This is all we shall say, in answer to the first Objection.

The second grand Objection against the *Presbyteriall-Government*, is, that it requires all, of all sorts, to come to the *Minister* and *Elders* to be examined, before they can be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, which is (as some ignorantly say) to bring in auricular confession again into the Church, to bring the people of God into a spirituall slavery and bondage unto the Eldership, and which is an usurpation more then prelaticall, and a tyrannicall domineering over mens consciences, and hath no footing in the Word; for the Scripture saith, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eate*, &c. It is not said, *Let him first be examined by the Ministers and Elders*: the Scripture addes, *He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself*, not to the Eldership. And why then must a man submit himself unto the examination of the Elder-

ship?

ſhip? and how come the Elderſhip to be guilty of another mans unworthy receiving? It is further added by ſome, that for their parts, they will willingly come before the Miniſter, and ſubmit to his examination, but they will rather for ever be without the Sacrament, then ſubmit to come before the *Lay-Elder*, for whom, they ſee no warrant in the Word of God: Others ſay, that they will freely yield that the *younger ſort*, that never have received the Sacrament, ſhould preſent themſelves to the *Elderſhip* to be catechized, and inſtructed, and fitted for the Sacrament; but they will never yield, that old men and women, that heretofore have divers times received, ſhould now in their old age be required to come, to be examined not only by their Miniſter, but by the Elders alſo, who oftentimes are very unfit for that Office: Others adde, that though ſome Miniſters rigidly keep all from the Sacrament, that will not come before the Elderſhips; yet there are others, that are *Presbyterians, and have Elders choſen, that act without them*, and will receive us to the Sacrament without comming before them. Theſe, and ſuch like Objections, are brought againſt this way of Examination, that is ſo happily begun amongſt us. Now that we might ſatisfie theſe Objections, and make good our practice out of the Word of God, we ſhall briefly do theſe four things.

1. *We will declare what our practice is in this particular.*

2. *We will prove, that he that will come to the Sacrament, ought firſt to ſubmit to examination.*

3. *That the power to examine, belongs not to the Miniſter alone, nor to the Miniſter with the whole Church, but to the Miniſter and Elders.*

4. *We will anſwer the Objections, that are brought againſt this way of examination by the Miniſter and Elders.*

For the first of these, we say;

First, That the *Presbyterial-Government*, doth not precisely & peremptorily require of those that come to the Sacrament, that they should first be examined by questions and answers; but if any man or woman shall make a good profession of their Faith in a continued discourse, without being *asked any questions*, it will be as well accepted, as if they were examined by particular questions.

Secondly, that this *examination* or *profession* is not required every time men come to *the Sacrament*, but only *at their first admission*.

3. That he that is duly admitted into compleat *Church-fellowship in the Presbyterian-way*, is not only by vertue of his first admission, freed from all *after-examination* (unless it be when he falls into any scandalous transgression) in the Congregation, to which he belongs; but he is inabled by a certificate from his Eldership, to receive the Sacrament in any Church of the Christian world of the same constitution, without any new examination.

Fourthly, that the reason why ancient men and women, and others, that have formerly under the *Prelatical Government* been admitted to the Sacrament, are now required to submit to examination, before they can be again admitted, doth not *proceed from the nature of the Presbyterian Government, but chiefly from the neglect of the Prelaticall*: For it is so evident, that it cannot be denyed, that under the former Government, men and women of all sorts, though never so ignorant or scandalous, were in most places admitted promiscuously to the Sacrament without any examination. Now this grievous disorder, and great iniquity in the Prelatical Government, is the principal cause of all the trouble we meet withal

withal in ours; and we desire earnestly our people to distinguish with us, between a Church deformed, and reformed. If the Churches of God in *England* were once so reformed, that there were an orderly admission, by examination or profession, unto the Lords Table by the Eldership; then we should require none to come to examination, but such only as never yet communicated, whom we would endeavour to train up in knowledge, by catechizing, and by Gods blessing, make fit in time, to be partakers of such heavenly mysteries. But now because our Churches, through want of Discipline, are deformed, & all sorts have been sinfully admitted without tryal: Hence it is, that we are forced, even out of tender regard to the souls of old people, and to free our selves from the guilt of their sins, and out of desire to keep the Sacrament from prophanation, to examine even aged people (many of whom we find very ignorant) and all sorts as have been formerly admitted (many of whom we find to be very unworthy) that so we may bring our Congregations into Gospel-order. This we say, *we are absolutely necessitated to do upon conscientious grounds, which we cannot recede from, though we find it very prejudiciall to our selves, and to our Government.* But in the mean time, we desire our respective Congregations to consider, that this is a necessity, that the iniquity of former times hath brought upon us; and that it doth not flow from the principles of our Government, but only from the negligence and sinfulness of Prelatical Governours.

The second thing propounded, is to prove, that he that will come to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, ought first to submit to examination, and tryal, as it hath been formerly explained: For this purpose, we will lay

down these three Propositions.

1. *It is the Will of Jesus Christ, that no grosly ignorant, or scandalous person should come to the Sacrament.*

2. *That it is the Will of Jesus Christ, that those who are grosly ignorant, or scandalous, should be kept from the Sacrament (if they offer to come) by the Officers of the Church.*

3. *That it is the Will of Jesus Christ, that Church-Governours have some sufficient way to find out who are such ignorant and scandalous persons, that they may be kept away.*

1. Proposition. *That it is the Will of Jesus Christ, that no grosly ignorant, or scandalous person, should come to the Sacrament.*

1. No *grosly ignorant person*, because the Scripture saith, *that a man must first examine himself, and so eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*; and it likewise saith, that he that will come to the Sacrament must be one that *discerneth the Lords body*; otherwise he *eats and drinks damnation to himself*; and it adds, that we are to do this *in remembrance of Christ*, and thereby to *shew forth the Lords death till he come*. And therefore a man that is grosly ignorant, and is not able to examine himself, nor to discern the Lords body, nor to remember Christ, nor understands what it is to shew forth the Lords death, ought not to come to the Sacrament, no more then a baptized Infant, who is therefore not to partake of this Ordinance, because of his want of knowledge.

2. No *scandalous person*: This is evidenced from the words of the Apostle, *Let a man examine himself, & so let him eat*, &c. from which words we gather two things:

1. That he that would come to the Sacrament, *must examine himself*; which examination ought to be according to the nature of the Ordinance of the Lords Supper, *viz.*

1. In general; whether he be worthy to come, or no; (not with a *worthinesse of merit*, but of *Evangelical suitablenesse*)

2. In particular:

1. Whether he have *true Faith in Christ*, without which, he

he cannot worthily eat this bread, and drink this cup.

2. Whether he *truly repent for sin, and from sin*. For he that comes in any sin unrepented of, comes unclean, and so pollutes the ordinance.

3. Whether he be *truly united by love to Jesus Christ, and his members*; without which, he cannot enjoy communion with them in that ordinance. 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17.

2. That he who upon due examination, can find none of these qualifications, should not presume to come, which appears:

1. By the Apostolical command, *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat; so*, and *not otherwise*.

2. By the sin which he commits, in *being guilty of the body and blood of Christ*, vers. 27.

3. By the *Danger* he incurres to himself, in *eating and drinking his own damnation*, vers. 29.

2. From the nature of the Sacrament.

1. It is the *table of the Lord, and the Lords Supper*; and consequently the friends, and not the enemies of Christ, are thereto invited.

2. It is an ordinance, wherein we publiquely profess communion with Christ and his mystical body & if he that comes, be by sin disjoyned from Christ, he is guilty of a *sacrilegious lye against him and his Church*, whilest he professeth himself to be a *friend*, and is *really an enemy*.

3. It is (according to the nature of all Sacraments,) a sealing Ordinance, as is intimated in those remarkable sacramental phrases, *This is my body, this is my blood*, denoting not only a bare sacramental signification, but also a spiritual obsignation and exhibition of Christs body and blood, to a worthy receiver. Now a seal supposeth a writing to which it is annext, or else it is a meer nullity; and certainly Christ never intended to have his Rom. 4. 11.

Seal

Seal put to a blank or counterfeit writing.

4. It is an ordinance appointed for the nourishment of those who are spiritually alive, Christs body & blood being therein conveyed under the Elements of bread & wine; which they only can eat and drink, who are alive
Joh.6.63. by Faith, and not they that are dead in trespasses & sins.

5. It is the *New Testament in the blood of Christ*, that is, *a confirmation of the New Testament*, and of all the promises and priviledges thereof in the blood of Christ, which
1 Tim. 4.8. belong not at all to wicked men, *Godlinesse having the promises of this life, and that which is to come.*

By all which it appears, that it is the Will of Christ, that no scandalous person should come to the Lords table.

2. Proposition. *That it is the Will of Jesus Christ, that those who are grosly ignorant, or scandalously wicked, should be kept from the Sacrament, (if they offer to come,) by Church-Officers.*

And this is evident:

1. *From the power given to Church-Officers for that purpose.*
2. *From the evill consequents that will otherwise ensue.*

1. That such a power is given to Church-Officers, appears,

Not onely

From the proportionable practice of Church-Officers under the Old Testament, who kept the charge of the
a 2 Chr. 23.19. Ezek.44.7, 8. holy things of God, and were appointed [a] to see that none who were unclean in any thing, or uncircumcised in flesh, or in heart, should enter into the Temple, to
b Levit.10. 10. Ezek.22. 26. partake of the holy things of God, and [b] had a power to put difference between holy and unholy; which power was not meerly *doctrinall* or *declarative, but decisive, binding*, and *juridicall*, so far, as that according to their sentence, men were to be admitted, or excluded. That there was a power in the Old Testament to keep men from the Sacrament of the Passeover, for morall wickednesse;

wickednesse, *vide Aarons* rod blossoming, lib. 1. cap. 9, 10, &c.

But also,

From that power of Government, and *key of Discipline*, committed by Jesus Christ, to Church-Officers, under the New Testament. For Christ hath given to them the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, which imply not only a key of doctrine, but of discipline, and that both to *keep out such as Christ would not have received in, and to shut out such as Christ would not have to continue in*; The use of a key being for both these purposes. For shutting out those that should not be continued in, as is granted on all hands from divers Scriptures. [c] And consequently, for *keeping out those that should not be received in*, there being the same reason of both. *For to what purpose should such be received in, as are by Christs command immediately to be cast out again.*

c 1 Cor. 5. 13. Rev. 2. 14, 15, 20. Tit. 3. 10.

2. That divers ill consequences will otherwise ensue, if grosly ignorant, and scandalous persons be not kept a way, is plain.

1. *Church-Governours should be very unfaithfull Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ, and preverters of his Ordinance.* If a Steward to whom his Lord hath committed his goods to be carefully distributed, to such as are honest, faithfull, and diligent in his field or Vineyard, shall not only admit of *Loyterers*, and such as by their evill example discourage others; but also shall give to such the bread and wages which belongs to them who are faithfull and industrious, should he not be accounted a very unjust and unfaithfull Steward, and an abuser of his trust?

2. *They should be guilty of polluting and prophaning the* Sacrament. If a Minister should give this Sacrament to

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an Infant, or to a Mad-man, or to a meer fool; or to a Swine, or a Dog, would not all men say this were a horrible prophanation thereof? *Shall it then seem a small prophanation to give it unto one who is as ignorant as an Infant, and wallowеth as a Swine in the mire of sin and uncleanness?*

3. *They should express a great deal of cruelty and inhumanity to the soul of him to whom they give the Sacrament*; because they give it to one who will eat and drink his own damnation.

4. *They will hereby make themselves accessary to his sin of unworthy receiving*; For it is a certain Rule in Divinity; *He that suffers a man to commit sin, when it is in his power to hinder him, is accessary to the sin that that man commits*; as appears by the [a] example of *Eli*: And therefore, if the Officers of the Church that are deputed by Christ to keep grosly ignorant, or scandalous, from the Sacrament, shall yet notwithstanding suffer them to come, and can hinder them, but will not, they themselves become guilty of his sin.

Levit. 19. 17. [a] 1 Sam. 3.

5. *They do hereby grieve the Godly, that are members of the same Congregation, and as much as in them lies, they pollute & defile the whole Congregation: For know you not*, saith the Apostle, *that a little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

6. Adde lastly, that hereby they bring down the *judgments of God upon the Congregation*; according to that text, 1 *Cor.* 11. 30. *For this cause many are sick.*

From all this, we argue thus; If Church-Officers under the Old Testament had an authoritative power to separate between the holy and prophane; and if under the New Testament they have a power to keep out from the Sacrament, such as are grosly ignorant, or scandalously wicked; and if it be the Will of Christ, that the Officers of the Church should be faithful Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ, that they should not pervert, nor pollute his Ordinance; that they should not be cruel to the souls of their Brethren, or be partakers of other

other mens sins; that they should not grieve the Godly, nor bring guilt and judgment upon the Congregation of which they are Officers: Then it is the Will of Christ, that they should not give the Sacrament to such, who are grosly ignorant, and scandalously wicked.

That it is the Will of Christ, *that* Church-Governours *have some sufficient way to discover who are such ignorant and scandalous persons, that they may be kept away.* 3. Proposition.

This followeth clearly from the two former Propositions. For if it be the Will of Christ, that no grosly ignorant, or scandalous person should come to the Sacrament; and if they offer to come, should be kept back by Church-Officers; then it follows, That they must have sufficient way to detect who are ignorant and scandalous. *For Christ never wills any end, but he wills also all necessary and sufficient means conducing to that end.*

Now what sufficient means can be propounded or imagined, for detection of ignorant or scandalous persons, but by examination before these Church-Officers; examination, we say, of the persons themselves in case of ignorance, and of witnesses also in the case of scandal. For though in some particular cases for private satisfaction, private conference with the Minister alone may sufficiently discover the knowledge or ignorance of persons; yet in this common case, for publique satisfaction touching the fitness of persons for the Lords Supper, no lesse then a publike and judicial examination before the Eldership can be sufficient; inasmuch as an authoritative act of admitting, or refusing the persons so examined, depends thereupon.

To illustrate this;

If a man by his last Will and Testament, should leave unto the Master and Fellows of a Colledge in trust a

ſum of money, to be diſtributed to hopeful poor ſcholars, ſuch as were well verſt in the learned Arts and Tongues: Would it not hence follow?

1. That thoſe *Truſtees* have a power granted them by the Will, to examine thoſe that come to deſire that Legacie.

2. That if any refuſe to be examined, or upon examination be found inſufficiently qualified, they have authority to refuſe them.

3. That the moſt ſufficient, proper, and ſatisfactory way, is not to truſt to Reports or Teſtimonials, but to examine the perſons themſelves that ſue for ſuch a Legacie: So in the preſent caſe, Jeſus Chriſt hath left as a Legacie, the *Sacrament of his Body and Bloud*, and hath left the Church-Officers in truſt with it, and hath ſaid in his Will, That no groſly ignorant, or ſcandalous perſon ought to come to partake thereof; and if any come, that he be debarred from it by thoſe Church-Officers. Hence it followeth inevitably.

1. *That thoſe in truſt have power to examine ſuch as deſire to partake of this* Legacie, *whether they be of ſufficient knowledg, and of good converſation, or no.* 2. *That they have power to refuſe all ſuch as either refuſe to be examined, or upon examination, are found inſufficient.* 3. *That if the Church Officers would give up their account with joy at the great day of judgment, they ought not to reſt ſatisfied with private Reports or Informations of others; but to examine the perſons themſelves, that thereby they may faithfully diſcharge their truſt in a matter of ſo great concernment*; And that they that will have the Sacrament, according to the will of Chriſt, ought firſt to ſubmit themſelves to ſuch examination.

Beſides this that hath been ſaid, to prove that thoſe

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that would come to the Sacrament ought first to submit to examination; We shall further offer these following Arguments.

1. We argue from that general exhortation of the Apostle, 1 *Pet.*3.15. *But sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.*

Now if Christians are bound to give an account of their Faith and hope to every one that asketh them, *yea even to heathen Persecutors*: how much more ought they to do it to the Officers of the Church? especially at such a time, when they desire to be admitted to an *Ordinance* that is not common to all sorts of Christians, but peculiar to such as are indued with knowledg, and of an unblameable life and conversation.

2. *From that power that Jesus Christ hath seated in his Church, of examining such as are by the Will of Christ to be excommunicated from the Sacrament.* That there is a power of examining, in order to excommunication, appears from Matth. 18.16,17. and from Revel 2.2. where Christ commends the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus, because he could not bear them which were evill, and had tryed them who said, they were Apostles, and were not, and had found them lyars.* This trying was not only *charitative*, and *fraternall*, but *authoritative and judiciall.* For it was an act of the Angel of the Church; which Angel is not to be understood individually, but collectively, for all the Angels in *Ephesus*. And that there were more Angels then one in *Ephesus*, appears from *Act.*20.17. (The like may be said of the Angel of the Church of *Smyrna*, *Pergamus*, *Thyatira*, &c. for Christ speaks unto each Angel in the plural number, Rev. 2. 10,13,14.)

a *Zelum singularem laudat in tuenda disciplina Ecclesiæ quod vitiis in cœtu grassantibus se fortiter opposuerit, scandalosos censuris debitis correxerit, vel Ecclesiæ communione ejecerit. Ita enim præcepit Christus & Apostolus, & viguerunt censuræ in primitiva Ecclesia magno bono,* Pareus in locum.

b That the Church of *Ephesus*, is not Individually, but collectively to be taken, *vide Smectymnuum.*

From hence we argue, *If Iesus Christ hath given power Authoritatively, to examine such as are to be cast out from the Sacrament, then he hath also given power to examine such as are to be received in.* For there is the same reason of both. And as the power of excommunication would be wholly useless and frustraneous, if there were not a power of examination precedent thereunto; so would the power of keeping such as are grosly ignorant or scandalous, from the Sacrament, be utterly in vain, and of no benefit to the Church of Christ, if the power of examination should be denyed unto it. And certainly, whosoever is an enemy to this power, must be forced to grant, that it is the *Will of Iesus Christ*, that all sorts of people, though never so wicked, though actually drunk, though fooles, though Turks, Iews, or Heathen, are to be admitted to the Sacrament, if they come unto it.

For if there be no divine right of Examination, or of rejection, how dare any Church or State assume a power of making rules for keeping any persons from the Sacrament? should they make rules for keeping ignorant and scandalous persons from the hearing of the Word, would it not be accounted a sin of an high nature? And is it not as great a sin to keep any from the Sacrament, if Christ hath left no power for the doing of it? is not this to be wise above what is written? And therefore let us either admit all sorts to the Sacrament, without any distinction of persons, and thereby become guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and accessary to the sins of those that come unworthily; (as hath been said, and formerly proved,) or else let us diligently and conscientiously examine all of all sorts, that desire to be made partakers of this distinguishing ordinance.

3. From the titles that are given to the Officers of the Church, and from the duty that God requires at their hands. The Officers of the Church are called *Rulers* and *Governours*, & such as are *over their people in the Lord.* And it is their duty *to Watch over the souls of their people, as such as must give an account for them unto God* Now it is all the reason in the world, that they that must *give an account to God for their people, should take an account of their people*; and that they that *Watch over their souls, should know the state of their souls.* And that they that are *Go-*

1 Cor. 12. 28.
1 Tim. 5. 17.
1 Thess. 5. 12.
Heb. 13. 17.

vernours, Rulers, and Overseers, should teach, instruct, try and examine those over whom they rule and govern.

But you will say, who are these *Rulers and Governours*, by whom we are to be examined? Quest.

The Answer to this, will lead us to the third thing propounded; and that is to prove, *Answ.*

That the power of examining those that desire to be admitted to the Lords Supper, belongs not to the Minister alone, nor to the Minister with the whole Church, but to the Minister & Ruling Elders. The 3. Particular.

1. *Not to the Minister alone.* Indeed there is an examination, which belongs only to the teaching-Elder, and that is a catechizing of his people in publique, by questions and answers; and this is part of the key of doctrine. Gal. 6. 6. where the word κατηχέω properly signifieth a teaching by questions and answers.

But the *examination* that we are now treating of, belongs to *Discipline and Government*; for it is not only a naked examination, but an *authoritative determining whether the party examined shall be detained from the* Sacrament, *or admitted*; which is formally an act of Church-Government, and therefore belongs not to the Minister alone, but to all those whom Christ hath made Church-Governours, also: of which sort are the Ruling-Elders, as hath been sufficiently proved. The power of Discipline is given by Christ not to one Elder, but to the united company of Elders: and for one Minister alone to assume this power unto himself, it is to make himself the Church; it is to make himself a Congregational Pope; it is a bringing in of a Power into the Church, that would have some resemblance (as was objected) to auricular confession. *Non uni, sed unitati.*

Now there are two things we are very confident of;

1. That when the Parliament gave their allowance to the Presbyterial Government, if they had put the whole juridical power of the Church into the hands of the Minister alone, they that now seem so willing to come to be examined by the Minister without his Elders, would have

have more bitterly declaimed against that way, then now they do against this: For this indeed were to make every Minister a Prelate in his Congregation; and (as we now said) to bring in that which hath some resemblance to *auricular confession*.

2. That it is as warrantable by the Word of God, for one Minister to assume the whole power unto himself alone, of suspending persons from the Sacrament, who have been duly admitted thereunto (which is a graduall excommunication) as it is to assume the whole power of admitting unto the Sacrament; for *contrariorum eadem est ratio*. And oh that our Brethren in the Ministry, that take this power unto themselves, would seriously consider what is here said.

Secondly, the power cannot be placed in the whole Church collectively taken; for then it should be also in children and servants. The Scripture makes an exact distinction between Rulers, and Ruled; and we are very well assured, that if this power were seated in the Minister and whole Congregation, that they that are now so unwilling to come before the Minister and Elders, would be much more unwilling to come before the Minister, and whole Congregation. And therefore we conclude, That this power of examining, and receiving unto the Sacrament such as are fit, and detaining such as are found to be grosly ignorant, and visibly wicked must needs belong to the Minister, assisted with the Elders, chosen out from amongst the rest of the Congregation: For if the Elders are Rulers, and Governours, seated by God in his Church, (as hath been abundantly proved) then it will undeniably follow, *That whatsoever is properly an act of Government, must belong to them as well as the Minister*. And who can deny, but that the power

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of admitting unto, or detaining from the Sacrament, is an act of Government: and therefore it doth by divine right belong to the Elders, as well as to the Minister. But yet here we must carefully distinguish between the *act of examination*, and the judgment given upon the person examined. The managing of the Examination, is the proper act of the teaching Elder; It is he that is to pray for a blessing; It is he, that is for order sake to ask the questions. But as for the *determining*, whether the party examined be fit or no to receive, this is an act of power and government, and belongs not to the Minister alone, but to the Eldership. And it is a very great wonder unto us, that people should profess so much dis-satisfaction and dislike, in coming before the Ruling-Elders, whereas they cannot but take notice,

1. *That the Elders are such, as they themselves have, or might have chosen.*

2. *They are chosen for the relief and benefit of the Congregation.* That so the Minister might not be *sole judge* of those that are to come to the Sacrament, but might have others joyned with him, to see that he doth nothing out of envy, malice, pride, or partiality, but that all things be managed for the good and edification of them, for whose sake they are chosen: which two particulars, if our people did seriously consider, they would quickly be perswaded to a hearty and an unanimous submission unto this ordinance of Jesus Christ.

There remains the fourth thing yet behind, which is an answering of the objections that are brought against this way of examination by Minister and Elders. But this, and divers other considerable things, which we shall propound, to perswade people unto a cheerful obedience to this part of Church-Reformation, so comfortably

tably begun in many Congregations in this Kingdome; We shall leave, till we come to that part of this discourse, which we call, The EXHORTATION; to which we refer the Candid Reader, that desires further satisfaction.

And thus we have given you a short survey of the nature of the Presbyterial Government; together with an answer to the most material objections against it: which we have done only for this end, that so (as we have said) we might undeceive those, who look upon it as lordly and tyrannical; and by these bug-bears, are scared from submitting to it. And we beseech our several Congregations, to judge of it, as it is here represented, and to be willing to come under the yoke of it, which is light and easie, (being the yoke of Christ) and which will in a short time make our Congregations (if received into them) glorious for their unity, verity, and piety.

We are not ignorant, that it hath many Adversaries. The obstinately ignorant hates it, because it will not suffer him to go blindfold to hell. The prophane person hates it, because it will not suffer him to eat and drink his own damnation, by unworthy coming to the Sacrament. The Heretique hates it, because after two or three admonitions, it rejects him. The Jesuite hates it, because it is an invincible bulwark to keep out Popery. The Schismatique, because the main design of it, is to make all the Saints to be of one lip, one heart, and one way. And above all, the Devil hates it, because if rightly managed, it will in a short time blow up his kingdome.

But notwithstanding all these great and potent enemies, our comfort is, That this Government is the Government of Jesus Christ, who is the King of his Church,

Church, and hath given unto us the keyes of his Kingdom, and hath promiſed to be with us, to protect and defend us to the end of the world; upon whoſe ſhoulders the government is laid; & though we be utterly unable, yet he that was able to bear the wrath of God upon his ſhoulders, is able to bear up this Goverment againſt the wrath of man. For this end and purpoſe, all power in heaven and earth is given unto him; and he is now ſitting at the right hand of God, for the more effectual exerciſing thereof: and will there remain, till he hath made all his enemies his foot-ſtool. Whoſe priviledge it is, to rule in the midſt of his enemies: And will one day ſay, Thoſe mine enemies, which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring hither and ſlay them before me. *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth; ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling. Kiſſe the Son leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little; bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.*

THere remains the ſecond particular yet behind; and that is the *Vindication of our perſons*, (eſpecially of ſuch amongſt us, who are teaching Elders,) from the ſlanders and cruel reproaches that are caſt upon us; which we ſhall undertake, not ſo much for our own, as for our peoples ſake, leſt hereby our Miniſtry ſhould be rendred uſeleſs and ineffectual; for (as [a] *Auſtine* ſaith) *though a Miniſters good conſcience is ſufficient for himſelf, yet his good name is neceſſary for his people:* who ordinarily diſ-eſteem the Doctrine of him, whoſe perſon they diſ-eſteem. We thank God, we can ſay with the Apoſtle, with us, *It is a very ſmall thing that we ſhould be judged of mans judgment: He that judgeth us is the Lord.* We

[a] *Mihi quidem ſufficit conſcientia mea, vobis ut neceſſaria eſt fama mea.* Aug. ad fratr. in Eremo.

remember what the Apostle tells us in that little Book of Martyrs, of divers Saints, whose *shoe-latchets we are not worthy to untye; who endured cruell mockings, yea moreover bonds and imprisonments, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword*, &c. *of whom the world was not worthy*, and yet even they were not *thought worthy to live in the world.* And therefore we can with the more willingness, suffer our selves to be the *But* of every mans malice, and the subject of every dayes Pamphlet. We read, that even *Elias* himself was called the *troubler of Israel*, by him who was the chief *troubler thereof.* And that Saint *Paul*, who was wrapt up into the third heaven, was accused by *Tertullus*, to be *a Pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world.* And that the Primitive Confessors and Martyrs, famous for the holiness of their lives, were charged before the Heathen Emperors, to be the vildest of men; to be first murderers, and then eaters of their own children; to be guilty of incestuous marriages, and in their private meetings to commit uncleanness. And their Religion also was represented, as the cause of all the Earthquakes, famines, plagues, and other miseries of those times.

Tertullian. Apologet.

We have formerly made mention of the reproaches which the *Anabaptists* of *Germany* cast upon *Luther*; and we might adde the horrible and prodigious lies & slanders raised by the *Arians* against *Athanasius*, that great Champion of Jesus Christ; and the hideous and strange reports, and bitter invectives of *Michael Servetus*, and *Bolseck*, against *Calvin.* But that which doth quiet our spirits, more then all this, is, the consideration of Christ Jesus himself, who when he was here upon Earth, was accused to be an *Enemy to* Cæsar, *a friend to* Publicans

and

and Sinners, *a Glutton and a Wine-bibber*, &c. *It is enough for the* Disciple *that he be as his* Master, *and the* Servant *as his* Lord; *if they have called the Master of the house* Belzebub; *how much more shall they call them of his Houshold?*

As for the particular accusations that are charged upon us, they are, we confess, very many, and very great; and if to be accused, were sufficient to make us guilty, we were of all men most miserable. But we hope it may be said of us, as it was once of *Cato*, *That as he was* 32. *times accused, so he was* 32. *times cleared and absolved.* And we trust, that the Lord will in due time, dispell all these thick mists and fogs which our adversaries have raised up against us, and bring forth at last our *Righteousnesse as the light, and our judgment as the noon day.* And we do here protest before the great God, that in all the great changes that have bin lately made amongst us, it hath been our great endeavour to keep our selves unchanged, making the *unchangeable Word* our *Rule*, and the *unchangeable God* our *Rock*. And we are confident, that no man will account us *Apostatized from our principles*, but such as are in a great measure *Apostatized from their own professions* There are some men that *Proteus*-like, can transform them into all shapes, for their own advantage, according to the times wherein they live; and *Camelion-like*, can change themselves into any colour but white, can turn any thing, but what they should be. And because we cannot change our consciences with the times, as some do; therefore, and therefore only, are we counted *Changlings*. It is just with such men, as with men in a ship at Sea, that will not be perswaded, but that the shore they pass by moves, and not the ship wherein they are. As for Us, we are, and hope (through Gods grace) ever shall be fixt and immoveable in our

first principles. We were not the causers of the first War, between King and Parliament; but were called by the Parliament to their assistance: and the ground of our ingaging with them was, *The Propositions and Orders of the Lords, and Commons in Parl. Jun.* 10. 1642. for bringing in of mony and plate, &c. wherein they assured us, that whatever should be brought in thereupon, should not at all be employed upon any other occasion, *Then to maintain the Protestant Religion, the Kings authority and his person, in his Royall Dignity; the free course of justice; the Laws of the Land; the peace of the Kingdom; and the Priviledges of Parliament, against any force which shall oppose them.* And in this we were daily confirmed & incouraged more and more, by their many subsequent Declarations and Protestations, which we held our selves bound to believe, knowing many of them godly and conscientious men, of publique Spirits, zealously promoting the good both of Church and State. The War we ingaged in by Authority of Parliament, was only defensive, (which not only [a] Bishop *Bilson*, and [b] Bishop *Bedell*, but divers others of the Prelatical way hold to be just and warrantable.) We never opposed the King further, then He opposed His own Laws: Our aym in all that great Undertaking (as the great Heart-searcher knows) was to *secure Religion, to preserve the Government of the Kingdom, and to remove the Wicked from before the King, that his Throne might be established in Righteousness.*

[a] In his Book of Christian subjection, *&c.*
[b] In his letters to *Wadesworth.*

And this Act of ours, was not at all contrary to the *Oath* of *Allegeance* which we have taken; because the intent of that Oath can be no other, then to oblige to obey the King, according to the Laws of the Kingdome; and to our knowledg, we never disobeyed the King in his legall

gall and political capacity; though we confeſs we did, and by the Law were allowed to deny obedience unto him in his perſonall capacity, when it did croſs his legall. And therefore they that charge us to deeply, and reiterate their charge by their multiplyed Pamphlets, *That we Miniſters are the cauſe of all the Murders and Bloodſh. ddings of theſe late years, and other horrid practices which we forbear to mention, have the greater ſin.*

But our comfort is, the witneſs of our Conſciences, and the integrity of our Carriages; and we doubt not but we can truly appeal, as *David* did, when he was accuſed for ſeeking the life of *Saul*. *The Lord judg between them and us, and plead our cauſe, and deliver us out of the hands of theſe cruell and unreaſonable accuſers.* This is all we ſhall return in anſwer to the firſt War; As for the ſecond War, we profeſs, we ſtand amazed at the impudency of that man, who is not afraid, even againſt his own conſcience (we fear) to ſay of the Presbyterian Miniſters, *That they did ſeparate their conſecrated Lungs, for Bellows to blow up the Coals amongſt the People this laſt Summer; That they were the Ghoſtly Fathers of all or the greateſt part of thoſe Anti-Parliamentary Barabaſſes, who ſo lately commenced Maſters of Miſ-rule in* Surrey, Suſſex, Kent, Eſſex, Wales, &c. *That inſtead of liſting up their voyces like Trumpets, to cauſe the People to know their abominations, they liſt them up like Trumpets, to prepare them to commit abominations, &c.* That Tumults, Inſurrections, and Rebellions of the People againſt Authority, *in order to the advancement of High Presbytery, ſeem lawfull, yea, and commendable practices unto many of them.* To all which, and Multitudes of ſuch like cruel invectives, we return the anſwer of the Archangel, *Jude 9. The Lord rebuke thee.* It is well known to all that are not wilfully and maliciouſly blind, what help the Presbyterian Miniſters and People did contribute towards the quenching of *J. G.*

of those flames; and that in all probability, the Army had been utterly destroyed, had not the Presbyterian Forces in *Lancashire*, *Suffolk*, *Essex*, and in divers other places (incouraged by the Ministers) come in timously, and vigorously to their assistance. And the time was, when this was ingenuously acknowledged by one of the chiefest of the Army, though the fore-mentioned Pamphleter, possessed with prejudice against us, will not remember any such thing; and though some of us be like to be dealt withall by way of recompence, just as *M. Tullius Cicero* was, who had his head cut off by *Popilius Lænas*, whose head he had saved from cutting off; or as *Constans*, the Son of *Constantine* the great was served, who was kil'd by one *Magnentius*, whose life he had formerly preserved. And what the Ministers of *London* in particular did in this kind, is well known to all unprejudiced Citizens. We did not abet (as we are falsly accused) but abhor and detest, that *horrid violence offered to the Parliament*, *upon that fatall Munday*, July 6. 1647. We have always been, and still are friends to the *Priviledges of Parliament*, *according to our Covenant*. And for this very cause it is, even because we will not break the priviledges of Parliament, that we suffer so deeply from these kind of men at this day. Although we could (if recriminations were good answers) put them in mind of Pamphlets, not a few, written by them, and those of their way, *in justification of as horrid acts of violence offered to the Parliament*. When the Scottish Army came last into *England*, (though we are shamefully traduced, as if we had encouraged and invited them to come in,) yet our consciences do witness with us, and our *Auditors* can testifie for us, that we did unanimously oppose them, as men that pretended the *Covenant*,

Pezelii mellificium historicum, pars 2. pag. 268.

venant, but acted quite contrary unto it. We profess, that in conscience we are bound, and in practice we shall endeavour to obey *lawfull Authority in all lawfull things*; and when we cannot actively obey, we shall be ready *passively to submit*. If our hearts deceive us not, we have no design but the *glory of God*, *no interest like that of Religion*. We desire more to *sow spiritualls*, then *reap temporalls*. And that Christ and his Gospel, may be exalted, though upon our ruines. Pardon us, that we become fools in glorifying, for ye have compelled us. We hunt not after tythes, and great Livings, but seek the salvation of our peoples souls; and had our enemies a window into our hearts, they would finde these our professions to be true and unfeigned. And yet we must crave leave to tell these men, *That the design of taking away Tythes from the Ministry, was first invented by that cursed Apostate* Julian, *who* (*as Mr.* Stock *that Reverend, pious, and painfull Preacher hath observed,*) *by this means is noted, more to have overthrown the Church, then all the Persecuting Emperours before him. Because they took away Presbyters, and their Martyrs blood was the seed of the Church,) but he took away Presbyterium, the Ministry it self, in withdrawing the maintenance from the Church, and so overthrew the Worship of God.* As for our way of preaching, though we are far from justifying any *indiscreet and passionate expressions*, yet we conceive it to be very hard measure, to have our integrity arraigned and condemned for humane infirmities. And we hope we may, without boasting, say thus much; That the *setled Ministry of England* was never more *censured, molested, impoverished; and yet never more pious, peaceable, and painfull.* And that our condition in this juncture of affaires, is just like that of the *Romane*, *That had a suit commenced against him, because he did not receive the sword of his enemy far enough in-*

M. *Stock* upon Malachy, 1. cap. 3.

to his bowels. And that therefore it is that some men rail against us, because we will not break our *Oathes and Covenants*, and will not *serve the times*, but *serve the Lord.* It is a great refreshing to us, to consider the wise dispensation of God, in ordering the affaires of this Kingdome, so, as he hath thereby discovered the hidden hypocrisie and cousenage of many men, unto those who otherwise would not have believed it. And we earnestly intreat these men to consider, as in the sight of God, before whose dreadfull judgment Seat, both we and they must shortly give an account of all things done in these our mortall bodies; Whether in that dreadful day it will appear a *righteous thing*, If those who have cryed down *Persecution so much*, should now themselves become the *greatest Persecutors.* And if they who have formerly abhorred others, as men transported with an *Antichristian spirit*, but for a bare suspition, that if they got power into their hands, they would prove *cruell and tyrannicall to poor tender consciences*, should now actually attempt to do that themselves, the which upon bare suspition, they did condemn in others: And if any who have accused others for seeking great Offices, and places of gain and preferment, should now manifest themselves to be none of the least self-seekers. Alas! who knows, or can discern the deceitfulnes of our hearts? and that if we give way uponmeer outward occurrences, to change our principles, but that upon further changes, the Righteous Lord may leave us to Satans stronger delusions, to transport us further, then at present can come in our hearts to imagine; that so after all the glorious beginnings in the Spirit, we should fearfully Apostatize, and end in the flesh. For our parts, we tremble to think of those formidable

Iudgments

Judgments of our Righteous God. And our prayer to God is, that he would keep us sincere in all changes, and that he would plead our cause for us. And our *rejoycing, is the testimony of our consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdome, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.* It is the integrity of our consciences, that carries us above all the reproaches and slanders that are cast upon us: and that makes us go on in doing our duties, maugre all opposition; and to commit the maintaining of his own cause, and the cleering of our callings and persons unto the Lord, who judgeth righteously.

The EXHORTATION.

HAving thus in few words, vindicated both our Government and our Persons, we conceive it necessary to subjoyn an Exhortation unto all the Ministers, and Elders, and people, that are within the Province; which we shall branch into these ensuing particulars:

1. We shall direct our speech *unto the Ministers and Ruling Elders, that have accepted of, and do act according to the Rules of the Presbyterian Government, as they are conjoyned in one and the same Presbytery.*

2. *Unto those of our respective Congregations, that submit unto the Government, and are admitted unto the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, in the Presbyterian way.*

3. *Unto those that live within the bounds of the Province, and have not yet submitted to the Government, nor are ad-*

mitted to the Sacrament, in the Presbyteriall way.

1. We shall direct our speech unto the Ministers and Ruling-Elders, that have accepted of, and do act according to the Rules of the Presbyterian Government, as they are conjoyned in one and the same Presbytery.

That which we have to say unto them, is,

To perswade them to be *faithfull in the discharge of the great trust committed unto them.* To be a *Ruler in Gods house,* as it is a place of *great honour*, so also of *great trust*; and he that hath this trust committed unto him, ought to be one of a thousand. It is a good saying of an Heathen, *Magistratus virum indicat*, Magistracy will try a man what he is; so will this office you. Such are the mountains of opposition you are like to meet withall; such is the courage you must put on; such is the wisdome and piety you must be cloathed withall, that we may truly say with the Apostle, *Who is sufficient for these things?* As *Tacitus* saith of *Galba*, that he was *Capax imperii, nisi imperasset*, thought very fit to have been an *Emperour*, had he not been an *Emperour*; so there are many that have been thought fit to be *Elders*, till they were made *Elders*. Many that seemed very good, when private Christians; when advanced into places of trust, have proved very wicked. To have the *body and blood of Christ Sacramentall in your custody*; To be made *Keepers of Christs Vineyard*, and *watchmen over his flock*; To have the *keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* committed unto you: This is not only a great honour, but a great burden. And therefore it must be your exceeding great care, so to behave your selves in the Church of God, which is his house, that you may give up your account with joy at that great day. For this purpose we Exhort you;

1. That

1. That you would labour to discharge your Office with care and diligence, according to the advice of the Apostle, *Let him that Ruleth, Rule with diligence.* The Apostle foresaw how negligent Elders would be, in the trust committed unto them; and therefore he chose to lay this speciall injunction upon them. You must not suffer the key of discipline to rust for want of using, but must remember, that the life of discipline is in the execution; and that the *unprofitable servant was cast into Hell, not for abusing; but for not improving of his Talent.* Rom.12.8.

2. That you would study to Rule with all humility and Self-denyal, not as lording it over Gods heritage, but as being examples to the flock, remembring the saying of our blessed Saviour, *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship; And they that exercise authority upon them, are called Benefactors: But ye shall not be so. But h that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief,* (or, as it is in the Greek, he that Ruleth,) *as he that serveth.* You must not be as *Diotrephes*, who loved to have the *Preheminence*; not as the *Pharisees*, *who loved the uppermost roomes at feasts, and the chief seats in the Synagogue.* 1 Pet.5. Luk.22.25,26. ἡγούμενος. Matth.23.7,8,9,10,11.

3. That you would labour to Rule the Church of God with all *peaceable'nesse*, and *quietnes*; doing nothing out of contention, envy, or malice; but all out of pure love, with the spirit of meekness and patience. That the people may read love and gentleness written upon all your admonitions and censures. *For the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in all meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devill, who are taken* 2 Tim.2.24,25,26.

captive by him at his will. Famous is the saying of our Saviour, *Have salt in your selves, and peace one with another.* By *salt*, is meant (as *Chemnitius* and others observe,) *sincere doctrine and discipline*, whereby the people of God are seasoned, and kept from the putrefaction of sin and errour; this *salt* is so to be sprinkled, as that if it be possible, it may have peace joyned with it. *Have salt in your selves, and peace one with another.* There are that think, that sincere discipline and peace cannot stand together, but they are confuted by Christs own words. The readiest way to have true peace one with another, is to have salt within our selves. There are indeed, some Congregations, that have this salt, without this peace; which is a misery to be exceedingly bewailed. There are others which have *peace* without this *salt*, but this *peace* is a wicked *peace*; a peace with sin and errour, which will end in damnation. But blessed and happy are those Congregations, that have *salt in themselves, and true Christian peace one with another.* A Church-Officer must not be a *bramble*, rending and tearing the people committed to his charge, but as a *figtree, vine*, and *olive tree*, refreshing them with his *fatnesse, swetnesse, and fruitfulnesse.*

4. That you would labour to make your Congregations pure, as well as peaceable; following after piety, as much as verity and unity. That all your people under your charge, may be visible Saints at least. It is the great complaint that some take up against the *Presbyteriall Government*, that it studieth unity and truth, but neglecteth holinesse and purity. And therefore we beseech you Brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is called *the holy One*, that you would labour to free the Government from this scandal. If there be any under your inspection grosly ignorant, or of scandalous life

and

and converſation, you ought not to admit him to the Sacrament; for if you do, you are acceſſary to his ſin of unworthy receiving; you are inſtrumentall to the damnation of his ſoul; you pollute the ordinance; you offend the godly amongſt you; you render the Government obnoxious to juſt exception; and you bring down the heavy judgments of God upon the Congregation. If there be any that after admiſſion prove ſcandalous, you are to admoniſh him; and if he continue obſtinate, you are *to put away from among your ſelves that wicked perſon*, to purge out the *old leaven*, that you may be a *new lump*. And this you are to do:

1. *For the Churches ſake*; that the Church in which you are Rulers, may not be infected; *for know you not, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

2. *For the ſinners ſake*; you muſt deliver ſuch a one *unto Satan*, for the *deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.*

3. *For Chriſts ſake*, that his name may not be diſhonoured, and that he may not be forced to depart from your Aſſemblies.

4. *For the Ordinances ſake*, that they may not be polluted.

5. *For your own ſakes*, that you may not be damned for other mens ſins.

Oh that our words might take impreſſion upon all your hearts, that are Miniſters and Elders within the Province! what a glorious thing were it, if it might be ſaid of all our Congregations, that they are not only *true*, but *pure Churches, and Churches united in love, and in the truth?* How would this tend to the honour of Jeſus Chriſt, the King of his Church? How would this make him delight to dwell in the midſt of you? How would this ſtop the mouthes of Anabaptiſts, Browniſts, and Independents? How would the blood of Jeſus Chriſt be preſerved from propha-

rits, seeking the things of Christ before, and more then your own; mourning more for the miseries of the Church, then your own; and rejoycing more in the prosperity of *Sion*, then your own.

A Church-Officer must be like old *Eli*, who was more troubled at the losse of the *Ark*, then the death of his two sons. And like the Psalmist, that bewailed more the *burning of Gods house*, then his own; and the desolation of *Gods Church*, then of the *Kingdome*. Psal.74.& 137.

8. That you would labour to be of a *liberall and free spirit, feeding the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.* A Covetous *Judas* will betray Jesus Christ for thirty pieces of silver, and sell a good conscience for a messe of pottage; and be prodigal of the blood of Christ, rather then lose his trading.

9. That you would labour to be of a *courageous and resolute spirit, valiant for the truth and cause of God*; as *Luther* was, who alone opposed a world of Enemies; and as *Athanasius*, who was both as an *Adamant*, and a *Loadstone*, in his private converse; he was very courteous and affable, drawing all men to him, even as a Loadstone doth iron; but in the cause of God, and of his truth, he was *unmoveable*, and *unconquerable* as an Adamant. There is nothing will cause you sooner to apostatize from your Principles, and from your practices, then base fear of men. This made even *Peter deny Christ*; and *David*, run to the *Philistims*, & *Abraham*, to dissemble. The Wise man saith, *The fear of man bringeth a snare, but who so putteth his trust in the Lord, shall be safe.* Our prayer to God for you, is, That the *Lord would speak unto you with a strong hand; and instruct you, that you may not walk in the way of this people, saying a Confederacy unto* Isai.8.11,12,13,14.

unus homo, solus totius orbis impetum sustinuit.

those

those unto whom this people shall say a Confederacy; nor fear their fear: but sanctifie the Lord of hosts in your hearts, and make him your fear and your dread. And you have a most blessed promise added, That *Jesus Christ will be unto you for a Sanctuary*, to protect and defend you in the day of your greatest fears and dangers.

10. That you would labour to be of a *tender spirit*, tender of the honour of God, of the blood of Christ Sacramental, of the souls of the people committed to your charge, of the truths and Government of Christ. A Church-Officer must not be a *Gallio*, not caring what becomes of Religion, and the interest of Christ. Nor a luke-warm *Laodicean*, neither hot nor cold, lest he be spewed out of the mouth of Christ. But he must be a *Josiah*, whose commendation was this, that his *heart was tender*; a *David, whose eyes ran down with rivers of tears, because men kept not the law*: a *Jeremiah*, who wished, that *his head were waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people.*

11. That you would *persevere* and *continue* in the great trust committed unto you, not deserting, nor neglecting the duty thereof, for any present discouragements whatsoever; remembring what our Saviour saith, *He that hath put his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the Kingdome of Heaven.*

We cannot deny, but there are many things to dishearten you, and make you grow faint and weary, *viz.* your own insufficiency to so great a work; the untractableness, and unperswadeableness of many among the people to submit unto the Government; The small beginnings of reformation in Church-Government unto which we have yet attained, and especially the little

countenance that it finds with many, from whom it might moſt juſtly be expected. Yet notwithſtanding, we hope, that that God which hath ſtirred you up to help to lay the firſt ſtone in this building, will not ſuffer you to leave the work, till the *head ſtone* be brought forth with ſhoutings, crying, *grace, grace unto it.* For this purpoſe, we deſire you earneſtly to conſider with us;

1. That the Authority by which you act, is divine. For the office not only of a teaching, but alſo of a Ruling Elder, is founded upon the Word of God, as hath been already ſhewed.

2. That the Government which you have entred upon, is not a Government of mans framing, but the Government of Jeſus Chriſt; who as King and Head of his Church, hath appointed you your work, and hath promiſed, *That where two or three of you are gathered together in his name, there to be in the midſt of you*, to protect, direct, ſanctifie, ſupport, and comfort you. This Chriſt is *that ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands, that will deſtroy all the Kingdomes that oppoſe him and his Government, and will himſelf become a great mountain, filling the whole earth.* The time is ſhortly coming, when the *Kingdomes of this world ſhall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*; when the *mountain of the houſe of the Lord ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the mountains, and it ſhall be exalted above the hills, and people ſhall flow unto it: And many Nations ſhall ſay, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the houſe of the God of* Jacob, *and he will teach us his wayes, and we will walk in his pathes. And that Nation and Kingdome, that will not ſerve the Lord Chriſt, ſhall periſh, yea thoſe Nations ſhall be utterly waſted.*

Matth 18.20.

Dan.2.35,45.

Micah 4.1,2.

Iſai.61.12.
1 Tim.5.17.
1 Theſ.. 5.13.

3. The reward you ſhall have for the faithfull continuance in your office, is not from men, (though you deſerve

serve, and ought to have even from men double honour, and are to be had in high esteem from your work sake,) but from God, who hath promised to give you a *crown of glory*, *that fadeth not away*, *when the chiefe Shepherd shall appear*; which promise is applicable, not only to the teaching, but Ruling Elder; the Apostle speaking there of Elders indefinitely, without restriction or limitation. 1 Pet. 5. 4.

4. The strength by which you act, is the strength of Christ; and though in your selves you be insufficient for so great a work, (*for who is sufficient for these things*) yet *by Christ that strengthens you, you are able to do all things.* God never calls a man to any employment, but he giveth a competent ability thereunto; and is angry with those that pretend insufficiency for that Office to which he calls them, as appears by the example of *Moses*, *Exod.* 3. 10, 11, 13, 14.

5. Consider what great things God hath brought to pass with weak instruments. *Moses* a shepherd was the deliverer of the Israelites out of *Egypt*; and a great part of the World was converted by a few Fisher-men. God delights to convey grace by contemptible Elements; as Water, Bread, and Wine, and to manifest his great power in mans great weakness, that so all the glory may redound to him alone.

6. That the greatest undertakings in the Church, have met with greatest difficulties and oppositions. *Jerusalem* was built again even in troublous times. *Tobia* and *Sanballat*, and all their Adherents set themselves against it, both with scorns, false informations, and acts of violence, yet the work went on and prospered: and though it had very many years interruption, yet at last God raised up the spirit of *Haggai*, *Zecheriah*, and of *Zerubbabel* Dan. 9. 25.

and *Joshua*, and the work was suddainly finished. *Who art thou O great Mountain before* Zerubbabel *? thou shalt become a plain*, &c. Oppositions should rather quicken, then cool activity.

7. That the greatest affairs and atchievements are wont at first to have but small beginnings, like the Prophet *Elias* cloud. The repair of the Temple and of the
Neh 4.3,4. City of *Jerusalem* was so small at first, as that the enemies mockt, and said ; *Even that which they build, if a*
Neh.4.10. *Fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall.* And *Iudah* her self said, *The strength of the bearers of the burden is decayed, and there is much rubbish, so as we are not able to build the wall.* And
Zech.4.10. yet notwithstanding God saith, *Who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoyce, and shall see the plummet in the hand of* Zerubbabel. *The hand of* Zerubbabel *laid the foundation of this house, his hand shall also finish it, not by might, nor by power,*
and Zech. 4.9. 6.8. *but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*

8. Consider, *who*, and of what *carriage* the most of those are that oppose this Government; and upon what grounds they are against it, and it will adde a singular testimony to the goodness of it, and incourage you the rather to stand for it, seeing so many erroneous, superstitious, hereticall, leud and licentious persons of all sorts, are so violent against it.

9. If God countenance the Government, it is the less matter if it want the countenance of man. Let not the faultinesse of others, discourage Gods faithfull Ones from their trust and duty: The fewer stand for it, the more reason there is that we should. *The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge :* And therefore let us not fear what man can do unto us, for there are more with us, then against us.

10. God hath the hearts of all men in his hands, and he can in an instant raise up a *Cyrus* to appear for his People,

People, and his Cause; he can raise up *Zerubbabels*, *Nehemiah's*, and *Ezrah's*; he can, and he will raise up Kings to be the nursing Fathers, and Queens the nursing Mothers of his Church; he can turn the hearts of people, and make them willing to submit their necks to the yoak of the Lord; and he hath promised, *that in the day of his power, the people shall be willing.*

11. Lastly, consider *what great things God hath done already for us*; and if he had meant to have destroyed us, he would not have done all this for us: He hath broken the iron yoak of Prelacy, removed superstitious Ceremonies, and Service-book, established a more pure way of Ordination of Ministers, and of worshipping of God, and there are hopefull beginnings of this Government in many of our Congregations; and we doubt not, but that God, who hath been the Author, will be the Finisher of this mighty Work.

Let the consideration of these particulars exceedingly affect you, and stir you up to persevere, & hold out in that great office you have undertaken, in nothing being terrified or discouraged, but trusting in the great God, who never faileth those that put their trust in him.

OUr second Exhortation is unto *those of our respective Congregations, that submit unto the Government, and are admitted unto the Sacrament of the body and bloud of Christ, in the* Presbyterian way; That we are to exhort you unto, is,

1. That as you are Saints outwardly, and such who live (as we hope) unblameably in the eyes of the world; so you would labour to be Saints inwardly, approving not only your wayes unto men, but your hearts and consciences unto the heart-searching God. And for this

Jer.4.14. Isai.1.16. this purpose, we perswade you, *to wash not only your hands, but your hearts, from all iniquity, and not to suffer vain thoughts to lodge within you; To put away the evill of your doings from before Gods eyes; To be Jews inwardly circumcised with the circumcision of the heart, in the* Spirit, *not in the* Letter, *whose praise is not of Man, but of God*; To labour more to be *good*, then to seem to be *good*; to be more ashamed to be *evill*, then to be known to be *evill*; to strive more to get your sins *cured*, then *covered*; and to be not *gilded*, but *golden Christians*. Alas! what will it avail you, to be esteemed by your Minister and Elders reall Saints, when the Lord who is your Judge, knows you to be but painted Sepulchres: What will it profit you to have our *Euge* and approbation, when you have the *Apage* and disallowance of God, and all his holy Angels? And therefore our prayer to God for you is, that he would make you not only nominall, but reall Christians; not only Saints by profession, but by conversation; not only morally and formally, but Spiritually and Theologically good, having your persons, principles, and aims holy, as well as your actions. *He and he only is a right Christian, whose person is united to Christ by a lively Faith; and whose nature is elevated by the* Spirit of Regeneration, *and whose principles, practices, and aims, are divine and supernatural.*

Rom.2.29.

Secondly, as it is your great honour and priviledg to be admitted to the Sacrament, when others by reason of ignorance or scandal are refused; so it must be your great care, to come *worthily*; and so to demean your selves, that you may be made partakers of the graces & consolations of this heavenly banquet; And for this end, we think it our dutie to propound certain necessary directions to you, for the right ordering of your Sacramental

cramental approaches; and to perswade you by the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the diligent and conscientious practice of these following particulars.

1. Not to rest contented with the examination of your Minister and Elders, but chiefly and especially to examine your selves, and so to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: To examine your selves, whether you be in Christ or no, whether You do truly repent; whether You do hunger and thirst after Christ in the Sacrament; whether You have an unfeigned love to God, and Your Neighbour, manifested by an impartial respect unto all the Commandements and Ordinances of Christ: For though we may and ought to admit you upon the profession of these graces; yet Christ will not bid You welcome, unless You have them in truth and sinceritie. And though we cannot discern who are hypocrites, and who are sincere amongst You; yet he that can distinguish between star and star, can and will distinguish between a true Saint, and a formal Hypocrite: and therefore labour to be such, indeed and in truth, as You seem to Us, to be in *word and profession.*

Secondly, As not to come without preparation and examination; so also, *not to trust to your preparation and examination.* Sacraments do not work as Physick, whether men sleep or wake, *ex opere operato*, by vertue inherent in them; but *ex opere operantis, according to the disposition and qualification of the party that partakes of them.* If the party be not qualified according to the tenour of the Covenant of grace, he eats and drinks damnation to himself, and not salvation; and when he hath done all he can by grace received, to prepare himself; yet he must not relie upon his preparation, for this were to make an Idol of it, and set up dutie in the room of Christ.

In te ſtas, & non ſtas. *Fruſtra nititur qui non innititur.*

Chriſt. Excellent is that ſaying of *Auſtine*, *He that ſtands upon his own ſtrength, ſhall never ſtand*; and of *Bernard*, *That man labours in vain, that doth not labour reſting upon Chriſt and his merits*; and therefore we exhort You, after all your care of preparation, to renounce it as to the point of confidence, and *to come to Chriſt in the ſtrength and confidence of Chriſt alone.*

3. Not to be ſatisfied in the bare bringing of the forementioned graces with you to the Sacrament, but to labour according to the advice of the Apoſtle, *to ſtir up the gift of God that is in you.* The Greek is, *to blow up*, and cauſe the grace of God within us to kindle. Fire, as long as it lyeth raked up in the Embers, will give no heat; a man may die with cold, for all ſuch a fire. Grace, as long as it lyeth dead in the habite, will not avail a man at the Sacrament. And therefore, that you may be worthy receivers, you muſt take pains to blow up the grace of God that is in you. You muſt ariſe and trim your *ſpirituall lamps*, (as the *wiſe Virgins* did,) that ſo you may be fit to meet with your *Bridegroom*. You muſt *brighten* your *ſpirituall armour*, & gird up the loins of your mind; You muſt not only have, but put on your *wedding garment*, and come to this heavenly feaſt apparrelled in all your ſpiritual ornaments. For it is a certain truth, that not only a wicked man, that wants grace, but a childe of God that hath true grace, may receive the Sacrament unworthily; though he cannot come unworthily as the wicked do, out of a total want of grace, yet he may come unworthily out of groſſe negligence, and ſinful careleſneſs, in not exciting and ſtirring up, and improving the grace of God that is in him. For not to *uſe grace*, and not to *have grace*, in this caſe, do little differ in Gods account. And therefore, if you would be worthy

2 Tim. 1. 6.

Manducatio Indignorum, & Manducatio Indigna. Alſted.

worthy guests at this Supper, you must not only have a *true* Faith, but a *fit* Faith; not only a true repentance, but a *fit* repentance; you must not only have grace, but act grace; you must set your *Faith* on work, to feed upon that blessed Sacramentall promise, *Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you*; *This is my blood which is shed for you.* And you must labour to make strong and particular applications of Christ to your souls, and to believe, that as verily as you eat the Bread, and drink the Wine, so verily you are made partakers of Christs body and blood, to your everlasting happiness. And so like-wise you must act repentance, love, thankfullness, and obedience, according to the direction of the Word of God.

4. *To do all that you do at the Sacrament, in remembrance of Christ.* For this is the main design of Christ, in appointing this Ordinance, that it might be a *Love-token* from Christ alwaies by us, and an effectual means to keep his death in perpetual remembrance, that it might be a lively picture of Christ crucified; and he that will receive aright, must be eying this Picture while he is at the Sacrament; and the more he minds it, the more he will admire it: The Angels [a] *stoop down* to *look* upon Christ incarnate, and it is the happiness of heaven to have Christ alwaies before them; and it is our happiness on earth, that we have such a blessed commemoration of Christ crucified: As Christ is all in all, in all Creatures, in all Relations, in all Conditions, and in all Ordinances; so more especially in this: For the Elements of Bread and Wine are not appointed for natural ends and purposes, but Christ is all in all in them: They are Representations, Commemorations, Obsignations, and Exhibitions of Jesus Christ. You must labour with the Eye of Faith to see Christs name written upon the Bread and Wine, and you must read Christ in every Sacramental action: when You behold the Bread and Wine consecrated; You must remember how Jesus Christ was set apart by his Father, from all Eternity, to be the Redeemer of his People: And when the Minister breaks the bread, You must remember the great sufferings that Jesus Christ endured for Your sins; and when You take the Bread, and drink the Wine, you must do this in remembrance of Christ; You must believe, that now Christ giveth himself to be Your nourishment, and your Comforter un-

1 Pet. 1. 12. [a] ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι βλέψαι.

to eternal life; and you must labour by a lively Faith, to take him as your Lord and Saviour, and to cry out with *Thomas* in the highest degree (if it be possible) of rejoycing, *My God, and my Lord:* And when you eat the Bread, and drink the Wine, you must remember, that Christ *is the living Bread that came down from Heaven, and that whosoever eats of this Bread, shall live for ever: and that whosoever eateth the flesh of Christ, and drinketh his blood, dwelleth in Christ, and Christ in him.* And you must endeavour to receive Soul-nourishment from Christ, as your bodies do by the bread you eat; and as the bread is turned into your substance, so to be made more and more one with Christ by faith: that having a reall, though spirituall union with him, You may have a happy interest and communion in all his purchases. This is the life of the *Holy Sacrament*, without which, all is but a dead and empty Ceremonie. But we adde further, That this remembrance of Christ must not be barely *notionall*, *doctrinall*, and *historicall*, but it must be also *practicall*, *experimentall*, and *applicative*; it must produce these and such like blessed effects and operations in your hearts.

Joh 6.51. and 56.

1. You must so remember Christ, as to find power coming out of Christ Sacramental, to break your hearts for all the sins you have committed against him. Christ is presented in the Sacrament as a broken Christ; his body broken, and his bloud poured out: and the very breaking of the bread understandingly looked upon, is a forcible argument to break your hearts. Was Jesus Christ rent and torn in pieces for you, and shall it not break you hearts, that you should sin against him? Was he crucified for you, and will you crucifie him by your sins? And besides, the breaking of the bread is not only

ly ordained to be a motive unto brokenness of heart for sin, but also in the right use to effect that which it doth move unto.

2. You must so remember Christ Sacramentall, as to find power coming out of Christ, to subdue all your sins and iniquities; as the diseased woman felt vertue coming out of Christ, to cure her bloody Issue; so there is power in an *applicative and fiduciall remembrance* of Christ at the Sacrament, to heal all the sinfull issues of our souls. There is no sin so strong, but it is conquerable by a power derived from Christ crucified.

3. This is to remember Christ aright at the Sacrament, when your never cease remembring him, till your hearts be brought into a thankfull frame to God, for Christ; and for his ineffable blessings and mercies exhibited in the Sacrament to a worthy receiver. And therefore it is called an *Eucharist*, or a feast of thanksgiving. It is as *Justin Martyr* saith, *food made up all of thanksgiving*. It is a custome in Colledges and houses founded by the bounty of great men, to have a *feastivall commemoration* of the bounties of their Benefactors. The Sacrament is a *commemoration day* of your great Benefactor Iesus Christ, wherein you are to remember all those things which he suffered for you; and the proper duty of the day is *thanksgiving*.

τροφὴ εὐχαριστηθεῖσα.

4. You must not leave off remembring Christ Sacramental, till your hearts be inflamed with an ardent love to Jesus Christ; for he is set forth in this Sacrament, in all the endearing expressions, as a crucified Christ, as pouring out his blood for us. Now it is an excellent expression of *Bernard*: *The more vile Christ made himself for us, the more dear he ought to be unto us.* You must never leave meditating of his love, *till he be as fast fixed in your hearts, as he was upon the Cross.*

Quanto pro nobis vilior, tanto nobis charior.

Donec totus fixus in Corde qui totus fixus in cruce.

5. You

5. You must so remember Christ, as to be willing to do and suffer any thing for that Christ, that hath done and suffered so much for you; till you can say with *David, What shall I render for all his blessings towards me?* till you can say with *Thomas, Come, let us go dye with him*; and we add, *for him*: till with the Apostle, you can rejoyce to be *counted worthy to be whipt for his names sake.* And can with *Ignatius* that blessed Martyr, call your iron chains, not *bonds*, but *Ornaments*, and *spirituall Pearls*; till you can say, as *Judg.*8.22. *Rule thou over us*, &c. *for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.* There is nothing hard to that Christian, that doth rightly remember Christ Sacramental.

Non vincula sed ornamenta, & spirituales Margaritæ, quoted by *Nyc. Vedelius,* in his Epistle before his Commentary upon *Ignatius.*

6. You must continue in remembring Christ in the Sacrament, till your hearts be wrought up to a *through contempt of the world, and all worldly things.* Christ instituted the Sacrament when he was going out of the world; and when he was crucifying, the whole world was in darkness and obscurity: and he is propounded in the Sacrament, as a *persecuted, broken, crucified Christ, despising, & being despised of the world.* And if you do practically remember the Sacrament of his death, you will finde vertue coming out thereof, to make you dead to the world, and all worldly things. The Sacrament is called by the Ancients, *a feast for Eagles, not for Dawes*; and therefore it was a phrase ordinarily used in the administration of this Sacrament, *Lift up your hearts to heaven where Christ is.*

Festum Aquilarum, non Graculorum.

7. Cease not remembring Christ, till you be made partakers of the rare grace of *humility.* Of all the graces that Christ picks out, in which he would have Christians to imitate him in, *humility* is one of the chiefest, Matth.11.29. *Learn of me, for I am humble*, &c. And Christ

Christ in the Sacrament is presented, as *humbling himself* to the death of the Cross, for our sakes. And what a shame is it, to remember an humble Christ, with a proud heart? The practicall remembrance of the humility of *Christ Sacramental*, when sanctified, is mighty in operation, to tame the pride of our hearts.

8. You must not fail to remember Christ in the Sacrament, till by faith you have *applyed Christ, as your Christ*: Till you can say with *Paul*, Gal.2.20. *Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Propriety in Christ, is that which sweetens all. For what are you the better *for Christ*, if he be not your *Christ*? The Divels and damned in Hell may remember Christ, but not with comfort, because they cannot remember him, but as their enemy. But you must so remember Christ, as to make him yours, by an *appropriating Faith.*

Quest. But how shall we be inabled thus to apply Christ?

Answ. This is done, by studying the free tender that is made of Christ in the Covenant of grace, which is expressed, *Isai.*55.1. *Revel.*22.17. Jesus Christ is that brazen Serpent lifted up upon the Cross, on purpose, that whosoever looks up to him, shall be healed; and whosoever receives him as his Lord and Saviour, *should not perish, but have everlasting life.* You must study the *freeness, fulness*, and *particularity* of the offer of Christ; and pray unto that Christ, who bids you believe, to give you to believe. And truly there cannot be a greater discourtesie to Jesus Christ, then to doubt of his love towards you, while ye are receiving the pledges of his love. For herein hath *God commended his love toward us, in that while We were yet sinners, Christ dyed for us.* Rom.5.8. What can Christ do more to manifest his love, or to perswade us of his love he bears to us? Much more might be said to this purpose, but we leave these things to be amplified by the Ministry of your faithful Pastors. And we proceed to give you further directions, for the right managing of your Sacramental addresses.

5. In the fifth place, we exhort you to consider the Sacrament, under a four-fold Notion:

1. As it is a *spirituall medicine* to cure the remainders of your corruption.

2. As it is *spirituall food* to strengthen your weak graces.

3. As it is a *spiritual Cordial* to comfort your distressed consciences.

4. As

4. As it is a *strong obligation* and forcible engagement to all acts of thankfulnes and obedience unto Jesus Christ.

Now if you would get the benefit and comfort of the Sacrament, you must when you come to it, carry these four considerations in your mind; and labour to draw out good from the Sacrament, according to each of them.

1. You must consider what sin it is, that is most unsubdued, and unmortified in you; you must use the Sacrament as a *medicine* made of Christs body and blood, to heal that sin

2. You must consider, what *grace* is most weak in you; and you must come to the Sacrament, as to food appointed on purpose to strengthen weak grace.

3. You must consider what *doubt* it is, that doth most obstruct your full assurance of salvation; and you must come to the Sacrament, as to a cheering Cordial, made for this very end, to revive your fainting spirit. It is also a *sealing Ordinance* to seal up the love of God in Christ, and to be as a *golden clasp* to fasten you to Christ, and Christ to you: And in which Christ doth often go from man to man, with his *privy seals*, and his *hidden manna* of heavenly consolation.

4. You must consider how apt you are to start from God, and his just Commands, and therefore you must at the Sacrament *renew your Covenant* with God, and binde your selves afresh unto God, in the strength of Christ, to be his more faithful servants afterwards, then ever you were before.

And hereby likewise you may know when you come from the Sacrament, whether you have received worthily, or no: For if you finde these Effects from the Sacrament,

crament, that it hath been *Medicinall, corroborative, comforting, and obliging:* If you find your sins more mortified, your graces more strengthened, your souls more comforted, and your hearts more engaged unto God in obedience; You may certainly conclude, that you are worthy Receivers. Nay we adde, for the comfort of *weak Christians*, if you find any one of these Effects. For sometimes Christ lets out himself in the Sacrament in a way of *Comfort*; sometimes he hides, as it were, his face, and sends us home more *inlarged* in our *desires* after him; sometimes he *kisses his children with the kisses of his lips*, and gives them to eat of his *hidden Manna*; sometimes he sends them home inlarged with *godly sorrow*, for want of his imbraces. His dispensations are various. But if you finde his presence in any one of these waies, You are worthy Communicants.

6. To endeavour, that your *eyes may affect your hearts*, when you are at the Sacrament. For as Christ in the Ministery of his Word, preacheth to the ear; and by the ear conveyeth himself into the heart: so in the Sacrament he preacheth to the eye; and by the eye, conveyeth himself into the heart. And therefore it is well called a *visible Sermon*. Take heed, lest the Devil steal away the benefit & comfort of it out of your hearts, by a wanton or wandring eye. And when you find your hearts deaded, and your meditations begin to flag and grow dry, fasten your eyes upon the Sacramental Elements, and Sacramental actions. Consider the bread broken, and the wine poured forth, and *let your eye affect your heart*; and never leave looking upon them, till Christ be pleased to look upon you, as he did upon *Peter*, and then your hearts will be affected indeed, as his was. Lam. 3.

7. To take heed of passing *rash censures* upon those that are admitted to the Sacrament, together with your selves; say not such a man is unworthy, but say rather with the Centurion, *Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, Wherefore neither thought I my self worthy to come unto thee*; say as *John Baptist*. Luk. 7. 6, 7.

1 Thess. 5.12. *profitable for you. And we beseech you, Brethren, know them which labour amongst you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their works sake; and be at peace amongst your selves.* And 1 Tim. 5.17, 18. remember, *That the Elders that rule well, are worthy of double honour, especially they that labour in the Word and Doctrine.* For the Scripture saith, *Thou shalt not muzzel* Gal. 6 6. *the oxe that treadeth out the corn,* and *the labourer is worthy of his reward.* And it likewise saith, *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.* And further, *Do ye not know, that they* 1 Cor. 9. 13, 14. *which minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple; and they which wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospell, should live of the Gospel.——If we have sowen unto you spirituall things, is it a great matter, if we reap your carnal things?* This we write, not to shame you, but to intreat you to give liberall and honourable maintenance to your godly Ministers, that φιλόξενοι. Tit. 1.8. they may not only be *lovers of hospitality*, but also inabled to exercise it: lest God in anger to you, drive your Ministers into corners, and take both your estates, and your Ministers from you; so as you shall neither have Ministers to give maintenance to, nor estates to maintain Ministers.

4. To perform all those offices which are required of you, as you are Members of a particular Congrega- 1 Thess. 5.11, 14, 15. tion. For this purpose we exhort you brethren, to *comfort your selves together, and edifie one another, even as you also do; to warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men: And see that none render evill for evill unto any man, but ever follow that which is good, both among your* Col. 3.1, 6. *selves, and towards all men, &c. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdome, teaching and admonishing one another in*

Psalms

Psalms and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Let no man seek his own, but every man anothers wealth; and let every one of you please his neighbour for his good, to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me. Let nothing be done through strife, or vain-glory; but in lowlinesse of minde, let each esteem other better then themselves. 1 Cor. 10. 24. Rom. 15. 2, 3. Phil. 2. 3. Now though we are far from thinking, (as some do,) that you are bound to perform these duties only to those to whom you are united in Church-fellowship, (for if you ought to pluck your neighbours ox and horse out of a ditch, and to relieve his body, when in want, though not of the same Congregation with you, much more ought you to extend acts of spirituall mercy (such as these are) to their souls; and this you are bound unto by communion of natures, communion of Saints, communion of Churches; and by that Royal law of love, which commands us to love our neighbour as our selves,) yet notwithstanding we conceive that you are more especially tyed by your Congregational relation, to perform these duties to those that are of your own Communion.

And therefore we further perswade you, *to watch over one another, to bear the burdens one of another, and so fulfill the Law of Christ. To consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as you see the day approaching.* And we likewise desire you not to neglect private meetings together for holy conference and prayer; that hereby you may be better acquainted one with another, and be mutual helps one to another in spirituall things.

We think that speech of *Cain* unbefitting the mouth of any Christian; *Am I my brothers keeper?* And though we believe, that none ought to take the Office of a Minister, but he that is elected and ordained thereunto, yet we believe also, *that it is the duty of all private Christians, in a brotherly way, out of the common bond of charity, to build up one another in their most holy Faith.* And therefore let
Mal. 3. 16. those *that fear the Lord, speak often one to another*, especially in these evil daies: *and strive together for the Faith of the Gospel, standing fast in one spirit with one mind.* For it seemeth to us to be very unchristian, that they especially, that have chosen one and the same Minister, and wait constantly upon his Ministry, and that break bread together, should live together like Heathens and Publicanes: at as great a strangeness one from another, as if they lived many miles asunder. And that Drunkards and Adulterers should meet together to dishonor God, and to encourage one another in wickedness; and you should not assemble your selves together, to honour God, to strengthen and edifie one another, and to confirm one another in the truth. Only be careful in your
1 Tim. 6. 4, 5. meetings, to take heed of *doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evill surmises, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth.* And
2 Tim. 2. 23. *avoid all foolish and unlearned Questions, for they are vain and unprofitable, and gender nothing but strife*; But help one another in that *one thing necessary*, how to *grow up in Christ*; how to *make your calling and election sure*; how to *thrive under Ordinances*; to be *faithfull under Relations*, to adorn the Gospel you professe; how to advance the power of godliness in your several spheres; and to be more spiritually serviceable unto God in your generations, and such like.

And

And we further exhort you, that if any Brother in the Congregation walk *disorderly* and *scandalously*, that you would carefully remember, It is your duty, first, *to tell him privately*; (and not to tell it to Others, to his and the Churches disgrace, as the manner of some is,) The text is plain, *Go and tell him his fault betwixt him and thee alone*; and if he shall hear thee, thou *hast gained thy Brother*. But if he will not hear thee, *then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established.* And if he shall neglect to hear them, *tell it to the Church*. And consider, we beseech you, that the most part of Sacramental reformation, begins with your performing of this dutie. For how can the Elders judicially take notice of any scandall, till it be brought unto them, in the way of Christ, by you that are Church-Members? There is great complaint amongst well-affected people, of *Sacramental pollutions*; and many thereupon, though groundlesly, separate from our Congregations. But if things were rightly considered, it would appear, that the people themselves are the chief causes of this pollution; for you are the *first wheel* of this part of reformation, and if you neglect your part, how can we discharge ours? And therefore we intreat you, even for Christs sake, as ever you desire to keep your selves pure from the sin of those that receive unworthily, and from being Authors of the prophanation of the Sacrament, faithfully to discharge this your dutie. And we shall (by the help of God) be exactly careful of ours, that so the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

5. *To labour to keep your selves free from the Errours, Heresies, and Blasphemies of these Times.* For it is evident to every impartial Observer, that false teachers, evil men,

and

and seducers are gone abroad amongst us; subverting of Souls. and overthrowing the Faith of some; speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them; subverting whole Houshold, teaching things they ought not for filthy lucres sake; creeping into houses, and leading captive silly women, laden with divers lusts; and by good words, and fair speeches, deceiving the hearts of the simple; yea, by slight and cunning craftiness, lying in wait to deceive (if it were possible) the very Elect; and not only privily, but now openly and avowedly bringing in damnable Heresies, denying the Lord that bought them. The *Divine Authority* of the Scriptures is oppugned, the *Deity of Christ opposed*, and his *Holy Spirit* blasphemed, the Doctrine of the *Blessed Trinity* questioned, the *Holy God* made the *Author of sin* and sinfulnesse, *Universall Redemption* preached, and the ends of Christs death evacuated, *Free-will* by nature to do *good* maintained, the *mortallity* of the *Soul* affirmed; the *Use of the Morall Law of God*, the *Observation of the Christian Sabbath*, the *very calling and Function of the Ministry*, the *very being of a Church* amongst Us, and all *the Ordinances of Christ*, are slighted and rejected. These, and too many more such *monstrous Opinions*, in the very spring-time of *Reformation* do so multiply amongst vs, that the *tares* are like to *overgrow the Wheat*, if God prevent not. And that which aggravates the evil of these things is, That *London* should be guilty of such *Apostacy* from the truth. *London*! which hast had able and faithful Ministers of the Word preaching to thee; that hast been so miraculously preserved from the Sword, Famine, and Pestilence these last Years, yet have Heresies been hatched and nourished up under *thy wings*; and from thee have they been spread all the Kingdom over. How many in

this

this City have turned away their ears from the truth, faithfully preached by their *Paſtors*; and being turned unto fables, have already followed the pernicious waies of Seducers, whereby the way of truth is evil ſpoken on! How is *Religion degenerated* into vain janglings, and the *power of Godlineſſe* eaten up by perverſe diſputings! And that which ſhould fill Us with more grief and aſtoniſhment is, That this inundation of Errours and Hereſies hath increaſed upon Us, after ſuch *prayers*, *preachings*, *diſputes*, and *teſtimonies* againſt them; after a *Covenant* ſolemnly ſworn to *God*, with hands lifted up to heaven, for the extirpation of them; and after a ſolemn Faſt commanded by Authority, and obſerved throughout the whole *Kingdom*, for our humiliation for them. And yet (with grief of heart we mention it) thoſe Errours which in the Prelates time were but a few, are now many: Thoſe that of late crept into corners, now out-face the Sun: Thoſe which the *Godly* abhor'd from their hearts, are now vented as *new and glorious truths*: Nay, to ſuch a degree of *Apoſtacie* are ſome arrived, being waxen worſe and worſe, that they are labouring for an *odious tolleration* of all thoſe *abominable opinions*, as can ſhroud themſelves under the name of Chriſtian Religion.

Wherefore, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, we warn you all to take heed of theſe *Impoſtors* and *Seducers*; and to keep cloſe to thoſe *good* and *old* principles of Chriſtianitie, which you have ſuck't in at *your firſt converſion, out of the Word*, from your godly Miniſters: And ſeeing ye know theſe things before, *beware leſt you alſo being led away with the errour of the wicked, fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſſe; But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour* Jeſus Chriſt; *to him be glory, both now and*

and for ever, Amen. Oh how happy were it, if it might be said of all You that submit to the Presbyterian Government; as once of the *Godly* in *Sardis*. *There are a few names even in* London, *that have not defiled their Garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy*. Which that you may the better be inabled to do, We beseech You Brethren, in the words of the Apostle, *To mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them, for they that are such, serve not our Lord* Jesus Christ, *but their own belly*. Observe here, that you are not only required to avoid their *Doctrines*, but their *persons*. And so likewise the same Apostle, *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholsome words, even the words of our Lord* Jesus Christ, *and to the Doctrine which is according to Godlinesse, he is proud, knowing nothing*, &c. *From such withdraw thy self*. It is your dutie, not onely to keep your selves from the Heresies of these times; but, that you may be preserved from the Heresies, you must keep your selves, and all under your charge, from such as spread them, and from their meeting-places. For he that without a just cause goeth into a *Pesthouse*, may thank himself, if he get the plague. And he that runs headily into temptation, *hath no promise from God to be delivered out*. The Apostle *John* refused to tarry in the same *Bath with Cerinthus*; and he commands us in his second Epistle, *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed, is partaker of his evill deeds*.

Rev. 3. 4.

Rom. 16. 17.

1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

Take heed how you touch pitch, lest you be defiled; And remember, we have faithfully discharged our consciences to you, in this particular; And that you may be

be further instructed against the Errours and Heresies of these times, We will propound a few *Antidotes* and *Preservatives* unto you, under these general Rules following.

1. Whatsoever Doctrine is *contrary to Godlinesse*, and opens a door to Libertinism and Prophaneness, you must reject it as *Soul-poyson*. Such are Doctrines against the *Sabbath*, *Family-duties*, and *publique Ordinances*: Such is the Doctrine of an *Universall tolleration* of all Religions. The Doctrine of the Gospel, is a Doctrine *according to Godlinesse*; It is a *Mysterie of Godlinesse*; *It teacheth to deny all ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Tit. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Tit. 2. 12.

2. You must reject all such Doctrines, as hold forth a *strictnesse above what is written*. The Papists teach many strict Doctrines, of self-whippings, and voluntary povertie, vows of continency, and many such like; but the Apostle gives you an *Antidote* against them, *Col.* 2. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. And so also our blessed Saviour, *Matth.* 15. 1. to the 10. Devout people are much taken with Doctrines that carry a shew of strictness, and of much purity; but you must not be wise above what is written; You must be *Candidates* of a *Canonicall*, not an *Apocryphal* strictness; And therefore when you are taught, that whosoever will enter into *Church-fellowship*, must first take a *Church-Covenant*; and that whosoever will be admitted unto the *Lords Supper*, must not only be free from ignorance and scandal, but he must have other, and more strict qualifications; you must enquire what word they have for these assertions; and where *God hath not a mouth to speak, you must not have an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe.*

3. Whatsoever Doctrine tendeth to the *lifting up of*

nature corrupted, to the *exalting of unsanctified Reason*, and giveth *free will in supernaturall things to a man unconverted, is a Doctrine contrary to the Gospell.* For this is one chief aym of *Pauls* Epistles, to shew, *That by nature we are dead in sins and trespasses, and that the naturall man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*, and that *the carnall mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* This Rule will preserve you against all *Arminian Tenets.* For this is the main difference between the Doctrine of the Gospel, and the Arminians. The Gospel makes *free grace* put the distinction between the Elect and Reprobate; and the Arminians *Free-will.*

Eph.2.1.
1 Cor.2.14.
Rom.8.7.

4. All Doctrines that set up our own Righteousnes, whether of *Morality*, or *Sanctification*, in the room of Christs Righteousnes; That place good works in the throne of Christ, are Doctrines of Antichrist, and not of Christ. For the Gospel teacheth us, that all our best works are imperfect, and that we are justified, not by our own inherent Righteousnes, but by the Righteousnesse of Christ only, made ours by Faith: this Rule will keep you from much of the *poyson of Popery.*

Gal.5.17.
Rom.7.18, 19,23,24.
Isa.64.6.
Rom.3.28.
Phil.3.9.
2 Cor.5.21.

5. All Doctrines that do set up Christ and his Righteousnes, as to decry all works of Sanctification, and to deny them to be fruits and evidences of our justification, are to be avoided and abhorred. For [a] the Scripture makes sanctification an evidence of Justification, and commandeth all Believers to maintain good works. This Rule will preserve you against most of the Errors of the Antinomians.

[a] Rom.8.1, 13.
1 Joh.3.14.
Eph.2.16.
Titus 3.8,16.
1 Thess.4.3.
Heb.12.14.

6. That Doctrine *that lesseneth the priviledges of Believers*

lievers under the New Testament, and maketh their Infants in a worse condition, then they were in under the Old Testament, cannot be the Doctrine of the Gospel. For the Gospel tells you, that Jesus Christ was made a Surety of a better Testament, and that the new Covenant is a better Covenant; established upon better promises. This Rule will preserve you from the poyson of Anabaptism. For if the children of the Jews were circumcised, and the children of Christians should not be baptized, either it must be granted, that circumcision was of no benefit to the Jewish children, which is contrary to *Rom.*3.1,2. or it must be granted, that the children of the Jews had greater priviledges then the children of Christians. Heb.7.22. Heb.8.6.

7. That Doctrine that cryeth up *Purity to the ruine of Unity, is contrary to the Doctrine of the Gospel.* For the Gospel calleth for unity, as well as purity, 1 *Cor.*1.10. *Phil.*2.1,2. *Eph.*4.3,4,5,6. And Christ prayed for the unity of his Church, as well as the Holiness, *Joh.*17.21, 22. and it is propheſied of the times of the Gospel, That in those daies, God will give his people, *one heart, and one way, and to serve him with one consent, Jer.*32.29. *Zeph.*3.9. This Rule will teach you what to judg of the Congregational-way: For certainly that Government that carrieth in the front of it *A tolleration of different Religions*, and is not sufficient to keep the body of Christ in unity and purity, is not the Government of Christ.

8. Whatsoever Doctrine is contrary to the Rule of Faith, or to any duty required in the ten Commandements, or to any Petition of the Lords prayer, is not a Doctrine of Christ, and therefore to be rejected.

We might add many more Rules, but we forbear,

leſt we ſhould be over-tedious. Our prayer to God for you is, That you may be fix't, not falling Stars, in the Firmament of his Church; *Not children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine*; Not Reeds ſhaken with every wind, but firm Pillars in his houſe. Wherefore, Beloved Brethren, *Stand faſt and immoveable, alwayes abounding in the Work of the Lord; Foraſmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

But now, becauſe he that would keep himſelf from the Errour of the times, muſt alſo keep himſelf from the ſins of the times: (For it is ſin that makes God give us up to errour, 2 *Theſſ.* 2.10,11. and it is ſin that makes a man like a *piece of wax*, ready to receive the impreſſion of any errour. The women in *Timothie* were firſt laden with divers luſts, before they were led away captive to divers errours; and whoſoever puts away a good conſcience, will quickly *concerning Faith make ſhip-wrack*, as we are told, 1 *Tim.* 1.19.) Therefore we are neceſſitated to inlarge our Exhortation to you in one particular more; which though it be the laſt, yet it is not the leaſt of thoſe things which we have to ſay unto you, and that is,

6. To exhort you, or rather to require and charge you, *to keep your ſelves unſpotted*, not only from the errors and hereſies, (as before) but alſo *from the ſins and iniquities of the times wherein you live.* We ſay, *unſpotted*, and ſo doth the Apoſtle, *Jam.* 1.27. It is not enough for you to keep your ſelves from being *bemired and beſmeared*, but you muſt labour to keep your *Garments* ſo white, as not to have the leaſt *ſpot of defilement* from the perſons or places where you live. The Apoſtle tells us, That *in the laſt daies perillous times ſhall come: For men ſhould*

2 Tim. 3.1, 2, &c.

be

be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankfull, unholy, without naturall affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traytors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more then lovers of God; having a form of Godlinesse, but denying the power thereof. Those words, *having a form of Godlinesse*, must be understood, καὶ κοινῶς, and referred to all the other sins. And the meaning is, That men should be *self-lovers*, having a form of godlinesse; *truce-breakers*, having a form of godlinesse; *truce-breakers*, having a form of godlinesse; *Traytors and false accusers*, having a form of godlinesse, *&c.* They should cover all their ungodlinesse, under the specious form of Godliness: Such are the times in which we live, of which we may truly say, There were never fewer, and yet never more Saints; never more nominal, never fewer real Saints; Never more self-seekers, and yet never more that pretended to seek the interest of Christ. We are an *hypocritall Nation, the people of Gods wrath; We have broken the Covenant of our God, even that Covenant, which in the day of our distress and fear, we made with hands lifted up to heaven. We are apostatized from our Principles and practices; We contemn the pretious ordinances, despise and abuse the Godly Ministers; We break the Sabbaths, hate the very name of Reformation, and scorn to submit to the sweet yoke of Christ and his Government; We are proud, secure, lyars, swearers, and forswearers, Murderers, drunkards, Adulterers, and oppressors: We have not learned Righteousnesse, but unrighteousnesse, by all the Judgements of God; We are worse and worse by all our deliverances; We have spilt the blood of Christ in the Sacrament, by our unworthy receiving*, and therefore it hath been just with God to spill our blood. It would be too long to reckon up all the particular sins of Magistrates, Ministers, Husbands, wives,

wives, Fathers, Children, Masters, and Servants; neither is it the design of this Discourse. We may truly say with the Prophet, *Ah sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity; a seed of evill doers, children that are corrupters, that have forsaken the Lord, that have provoked the holy One of Israel unto anger; that are gone away backward: Why should we be smitten any longer? we will revolt more and more, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in us, but wounds and bruises, and putrified sores, &c.*

Isai. 1. 5, 6.

Wherefore dearly beloved, we do most earnestly beseech you, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that you would be deeply sensible of, and humbled for these evills that do so much abound in the midst of us, for which the Earth mourns, and the Heavens are black over us. *Oh let your souls weep in secret, and your eyes weep sore, and run down with tears, and sigh to the breaking of your loyns, yea to the breaking of your hearts with godly sorrow, which may work in you repentance, never to be repented of.* Mourn more for the sins that have brought these miseries upon us, then for the miseries our sins have brought; more, for burdening God with sin, then for being burdened with plagues; more for your hard hearts, then these hard times.

And we further intreat everie one of you, to put *away the iniquity that is in his hand*; to know every man *the plague that is in his own heart*; *to search and try his waies, and to turn unto the Lord his God*; *to cease to do evill, and to learn to do well*: to be tender of the oathes which he hath taken, or which may be offered unto him to take; to keep close to his *Covenant*; to prize the Ordinances, Reverence Godly Ministers, sanctifie the Sabbaths, to hate hypocrisie and self-seeking, to receive the love of the truth, lest God give him over to believe lyes:

lyes. Not to truſt to his own underſtanding, leſt God blind his underſtanding. To practiſe the *truths* he doth know, that God may reveal unto him the *truths* he doth not know; not to heap to himſelf teachers, having *itching ears*, leſt he *turn away his ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables*; not to have the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in reſpect of perſons, imbracing the Doctrine for the perſons ſake, and not the perſon for the Doctrines ſake. To ſeek after the truth, for the truths ſake, with uprightneſs of heart, and not for outward reſpects, leſt God anſwer thee according to the Idols thou haſt in thy heart. To labour to be more and more grounded in the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt; to ſtudy catechiſme more diligently, and ſo to be led on to perfection; that he may not alwayes be a babe, unskilfull in the word of Righteouſneſs, but by reaſon of uſe, may have his ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil.

In a word, we once more beſeech you all that are admitted to our Sacraments, that your *converſation may be as becometh the Goſpell of Chriſt*; and as you have given up your names unto Chriſt by profeſſion, ſo give up your hearts to him, by univerſall, ſincere, and conſtant obedience: *And let one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity.*

OUr third and laſt Exhortation is unto all thoſe *that live within the bounds of the Province, and have not yet ſubmitted to the Government, nor are admitted to the Sacrament of the body and blood of Chriſt in the* Presbyterian way: Theſe may be reduced into two ranks:

1. Such as ſeparate from our Churches.

2. Such as continue ſtill with us, but do not joyn in the Sacrament.

The

The first of these admit of so many *divisions*, and *subdivisions*, and are so contrary not only to us, but one to another, as that we are hardly able to rank them into order; and yet for method sake, we will divide them into two sorts:

1. *Such as separate from us, only for matter of Government.*
2. *Such as separate from us, for matter of doctrine also.*

1. *Such as separate from us, only for matter of Government.* To these we have spoken already in our Vindication; We now think fit to add one thing more;

And that is, To beseech and intreat you, as Brethren, to consider, what a sin it is, to separate from Churches, which you your selves acknowledg to be true Churches of Jesus Christ; and that, while they are endeavouring more and more after a reformation according to the Word; and to set up Churches of another constitution; Is not this to set up Church against Church? and as the Ancients were wont to express it, *Altar against Altar?* And whereas you should rather joyn with us, and put to your helping hand to reform the Nation, and to bring our Churches into the order of the Gospel; do you not rather weaken our hands, by dividing from us, and dividing of us; and thereby obstructing and hindering the glorious work of Reformation? For what with the Prelatical on the one hand, that will not come up to a Scripture-Reformation; and with you on the other, that will not joyn with us whilest we are endeavouring after a Scripture-Reformation, The building of Gods house ceaseth, in most parts of the Kingdome; and instead of a Reformation, we see nothing but deformation and desolation. If we be the *Church of Christ, and Christ holdeth communion with us, Why do you separate from us? If we be of the body of Christ,*

do

do not they that separate from the body, separate from the head also? We are loath to speak any thing, that may offend you; yet we intreat you to consider, That if the Apostle calls those divisions of the Church of *Corinth*, wherein Christians did not separate into divers formed Congregations of several communion in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, *Schismes*, 1 *Cor.*1.10. May not your *secession* from us, and *profession* that you cannot joyn with Us as members, and setting up Congregations of another communion be more properly called *schisme?* The Greek word for *Schism* signifies *rending*; and sure it is, that you rend your selves from Us, and not, *as from Churches of the same rule*, but *as Churches differing in the rule*, with a dislike of Us, and a protestation, that You cannot joyn with Us as fixed members without sin; You hear Us preach, not as persons in Office, but as gifted men only; and some of you refuse to hear us preach at all: You renounce all *Church-communion* with us as members; and not only so, but you invite our people from Us, by telling them, *That they cannot continue with us without sin:* You gather Churches out of our Churches, and You set up Churches in an opposite way to our Churches; and all this you do voluntarily, (not separated, but separating, *non fugati, sed fugitivi*) and unwarrantably, not having any sufficient cause for it; and notwithstanding all this, yet you acknowledge Us to be the true Churches of Jesus Christ, and Churches with which Christ holds communion. May we not therefore most justly charge you as guilty in making a Schism in the Body of Christ?

We are far from thinking, that every difference in Judgment, or every separation from a Church, maketh a Schism; for it is not the Separation, but the Cause,

that makes the Schismatick. The Godly-learned say, [a] *That every unjust, and rash separation from a true Church,* (that is, when there is no just cause, or at least no sufficient cause of the separation) is a schism. And that there is [b] a negative and positive schism, the former is, when men do peaceably and quietly draw from communion with a Church, not making a head against that Church from which they are departed: the other is, when persons so withdrawing, do consociate & draw themselves into a distinct and opposite Bodie, seting up a Church against a Church (as you do;) which *Camero* cals *A schism by way of eminencie*; & further tels us, that there are [c] four causes that make a separation from a Church, lawful.

[a] *Schisma, ni fallor, est eadem opinantem, & eodem ritu utentem solo Congregationis delectari dissidio, & Schismaticos facit non diversa fides; sed communionis disrupta societas,* Aug. contra Faustum, lib. 20. cap. 3.

Schisma dicitur a scindendo; & est scissio, separatio, disjunctio, aut dissolutio unionis illius, quæ debet inter Christianos observari. Quia autem hæc Scissio maximè perficitur, & apparet in debitâ communione Ecclesiasticâ recusandâ, idcirco illa separatio per appropriationem singulavem, rectè vocatur Schisma. Ames. cas. consc. l. b. 5. cap. 12.

Schisma est secessio in religionis negotio, vel temeraria, vel injustâ; sive facta sit, sive continuata, Camero, de Eccles. tom. 1. pag. 396.

1. When they that separate, are grievously and intollerably persecuted.

2. When the Church they separate from, is heretical.

3. When it is Idolatrical.

4. When it is the Seat of Antichrist. And where none of these four are to be found, there the separation is insufficient and schismatical. Now we are fully as-

b *Schisma aliud est, ut loquuntur in scholis, negativum, aliud positivum. Negativum vocamus, quod non exit in cœtum & societatem aliquam religiosam, sed simpliciter secessio est, & subductio; cum non instituitur Ecclesia, facto schismate, &c. Positivum tum fit, cum instituitur Ecclesia, hoc est, cum fit consociatio quædam, quæ legibus Ecclesiasticis, & Dei verbo atque Sacramentorum administratione utitur separatim: quod quadam formulâ desumptâ ex Scriptura dicitur struere altare adversus altare, hoc est, quod Schisma Antonomasticôs dicitur, & κατ' ἐξοχὴν, &c.* Camero de Schismate, pag. 402.

c *Temeritas secessionis deprehenditur, ut loquuntur, a posteriori, si ejus occasio levis sit: erit autem levis, nisi vel inciderit gravis & intolerabilis persecutio, vel ille cœtus unde fit secessio laboret hæresi, aut verò deditus sit Idololatriæ.* Camero, pag. 399. And afterwards, pag. 405. *Quarta verò causa (cujus non meminimus supra, quia versabamur in thesi, hic vero meminimus, quia ventum est ad hypothesin) si agnitus fuerit Antichristus.*

sured,

ſured, that none of theſe four cauſes can be juſtly charged upon our Congregations. And therefore you muſt not be diſpleaſed with us, but with your ſelves, if we blame you as guilty of a poſitive Schiſm.

There are two things will be objected againſt what is here ſaid.

That you are forced to ſeparate from Us, becauſe of thoſe ſinfull mixtures that are tolerated amongſt Us; That our Congregations are miſcellaneous companies of all gatherings, without any due ſeparation of the wheat from the chaff: that all ſorts are admitted even to Sacramental communion. And that therefore you ought to come out from amongſt Us, that you be not made partakers of our ſins. *Object.* 1.

We anſwer,

1. That this charge, if underſtood of thoſe Congregations, that are reformed according to the rules of the Presbyterial Government, is moſt untrue and unrighteous. It is ſufficiently known what we ſuffer in our eſtates, and in our outward peace and quiet, becauſe we will not allow of ſinful mixtures in our Churches. The Lord that obſerves our particular carriages knows, that we ſtudy purity of members, as well as purity of Ordinances, and verity of doctrine. And though we dare not make ſeparation from a true Church, by departing from it, as you do; yet we do make a ſeparation in a true Church, by purging and reforming it, which you do not do. The rule of the Aſſembly for the Church-members, is very full: *That they muſt be viſible Saints, ſuch as being of age, do profeſſe Faith in Chriſt, and obedience unto Chriſt, according to the rules of Faith and life, taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles.* Doth not the Scripture require more then this? why then will ye ſeparate from *Anſw.* 1.

us for sinfull mixtures, when we are purging out sinfull mixtures? when God is coming towards us, why will you run away from us? When God is building us up, why are you so active in pulling us down? Are we not coming out of the Wilderness, and will you now forsake us? It is not many years since the ship of this Church was sinking into Popery, and then some of you separated from it into other parts of the world. And when of late years, there was hope through the mercy of God, of saving the ship, you returned back; and instead of helping to save her, you presently began to separate from her; and whilest we were pumping to preserve the ship; your practices have occasioned & made many leaks in it. This is a sad thing, and if rightly apprehended, must sit sadly upon the spirits of some.

Answ. 2. Suppose there were some sinfull mixtures at our Sacraments, yet we conceive, this is not a sufficient ground of a negative, much lesse of a positive separation. [a] The learned Author forementioned tells us, that *corruption in manners crept into a Church, is not sufficient cause of separation from it.* This he proves from Matth. 23. 2, 3. and he also gives this reason for it; Because *in what Church soever, there is purity of Doctrine, there God hath his Church, though overwhelmed with scandalls. And therefore whosoever separates from such an Assembly, separates from that place where God hath his Church, which is rash and unwarrantable.*

The Church of *Corinth* had such a profane mixture at their Sacrament, as we believe few (if any) of our Congregations can be charged withal. And yet the

[a] *Etiam secessio fit temerè, cum fit ob morum corruptelas; quorsum illud Christi pertinet,* Sedent in Cathedra Mosis, facite quæcunque dixerint vobis. *Cujus rei hæc est ratio, quòd ubicunque viget puritas doctrinæ, Deum in eo cœtu necesse est habere Ecclesiam, tametsi obrutam penè multitudine scandalorum. Itaque qui secessionem faciunt ab ejusmodi cœtu, haud dubiè inde secedunt ubi Deus colligit Ecclesiam.* Camero, pag. 400.

Apostle-

Apostle doth not perswade the godly party to separate, much less to gather a Church out of a Church. There were many godly and learned Non-conformists of this last age, that were perswaded in their consciences, that they could not hold communion with the Church of *England*, in receiving the Sacrament kneeling, without sin, yet did they not separate from her. Indeed, in that particular act they withdrew, but yet so, as that they held communion with her in the rest, being far from a negative, much more from a positive separation. Nay some of them, even then when our Churches were full of sinfull mixtures, with great zeal and learning, defended them so far, as to write against those that did separate from them. He that will never communicate with any Church, till every thing that offendeth be removed out of it, must tarry till the great day of judgment, when (and not till then) *Christ will send forth his Angels, to gather out of his Kingdome every thing that offendeth, and them that do iniquity.* Musculus tells us of a *Schwenkfeldian* at *Augusta*, whom he asked, when he had *received the Sacrament*; he answered, *not these twelve years*: He asked him the reason; he answered, *Because he could not finde a Church which was inwardly and outwardly adorned fit for a spouse of Christ, and that he would defer receiving the Sacrament, till he could finde such a one.* This man never did receive. No more will any of his opinion. We speak not these things, to justifie the negligence and wickedness of Church-Officers, in suffering these prophane mixtures; we have already proved it to be their duty, to keep all visibly-wicked persons from the Sacrament, and have given divers arguments to perswade them thereunto. We have likewise shewed it to be the duty of privare members, to

a *Mr. Carthwright. Mr. Dod. M. Hildersham. Mr. Bradshaw. Mr. Ball.*

Matth. 13. 9.

Musculus on 1 Cor. 11.

do

do what in them lyes, for the removing of ſcandalls out of the Church. If a brother offend them, they are not to ſeparate from him, (for this is not the way of Chriſt, to *gain*, but to *deſtroy* his ſoul,) but they are to tell him of it privately, and in an orderly way to bring it to the Church. And when they have done their duty, they have freed their own ſouls, and may ſafely and comfortably communicate in that Church, without ſin.

Object. 2. Though we do ſeparate from you, yet we cannot ſtand charged with *Schiſme*, becauſe the nature of Schiſme conſiſteth in an open breach of Chriſtian love; and it is ſuch a ſeparation, which is joyned with a condemnation of thoſe Churches from which they ſeparate, as falſe Churches, which we are far from.

Anſw. We grant, that to make up the formality of a *Schiſmatick*, there muſt be added uncharitableneſs; as to make up the formality of an *Heretique*, there muſt be added *obſtinacy*. But yet as he that denyeth a fundamental Article of Faith, is guilty of hereſie, though he add not *obſtinacy* thereunto to make him an heretique; ſo he that doth *unwarrantably* ſeparate from a true Church, is truly guilty of *Schiſme*, though he add not *uncharitableneſs* thereunto, to denominate him a compleat Schiſmatique.

Thomas Goodwin, in his Sermon upon *Zech.* 4. A Reverend Brother of your own, calleth *Browniſme*, *a bitter root of rigid ſeparation*. And we beſeech you, with the ſpirit of meekneſs, to conſider what bitter fruits have ſprung from your more moderate ſeparation: what great and wofull breaches have been made upon the bleſſed grace of charity: what harſh and rigid cenſures ſome of you have paſſed upon our perſons and government; calling us *Lordly, and Prelaticall*; and it, *Tyrannical and prejudicial to civill States*, on purpoſe,

poſe, to make us, and it odious, and thereby to render your perſons and way the more amiable to the people. And that which is more then this, Are there not ſome of you, that chooſe rather to joyn with Anabaptiſts, and Epiſcopal men, then with us? And that will give letters dimiſſory to your members, to depart from you to the Churches of the Anabaptiſts? and at the ſame time, deny them to ſuch as deſire them, for to joyn with Churches of our communion? Is not this to ſeparate with an open breach of Chriſtian Charity? We charge not theſe things upon all of you, but only upon ſome, whoſe names we forbear to mention. And for our parts, we do here profeſs, That it is and ſhall be our great care, to ſtudy *purity and charity*, as well as *verity and unity*; and *purity of members* according to the Word, as well as of *Ordinances*.

We abhor an over-rigid urging of uniformity in circumſtantiall things. And are far from the cruelty of that Gyant, *who laid upon a bed all he took; and thoſe who were too long, he cut them even with his bed; and ſuch as were too ſhort, he ſtretched out to the length of it.* God hath not made all men of a length, nor height. Mens parts, gifts, graces differ; and if there ſhould be no forbearance in matters of inferior alloy, all the world would be perpetually quarrelling. If you would fully know our judgments herein, we will preſent them in theſe two Propoſitions:

1. That it is the duty of all Chriſtians, to ſtudy to enjoy the Ordinances of Chriſt in unity, and uniformity, as far as it is poſſible; for the Scripture calls to unity and uniformity, as well as to purity and verity: and ſurely, it is not impoſſible to obtain this ſo much deſired unity and uniformity, becauſe that God hath promiſed, 1 Cor. 1. 10. Phil. 2. 1, 2. Eph. 4. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Jer.32.39. Zeph.3.9. Zach.14.9. missed, that his children shall serve him with *one heart, and with one way, and with one shoulder.* And that in the days of the Gospel, *There shall be one Lord, and his name one.* Joh.17.21. And Christ hath prayed, *That we may be all one, as the Father is in him, and he in the Father.* And he adds a most prevalent reason, *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* Nothing hinders the propagation of the Gospel, so much as the divisions and separations of Gospel-Professors. If then it be Gods promise, and Christs prayer, it is certainly a thing possible to be obtained, and a duty incumbent upon all true Christians, to labour after.

2. That it is their duty to hold communion together, as one Church, in what they agree; and in this way of union mutually to tolerate and bear with one another in lesser differences. And here that golden Rule of the Phil.3.15,16. Apostle takes place, *Let us therefore as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you: Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, Let us walk by the same Rule, let us mind the same thing.* This was the practice of the primitive Christians.

All such who professed Christianity, held Communion together, as one Church, notwithstanding the difference of Judgements in lesser things, and much corruption in conversation.

We beseech you therefore Brethren, that you would endeavour to keep the *Unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; for there is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your Calling; one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptisme; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

For our parts, we do here manifest our willingness, (as we

we have already said) to accommodate with you according to the Word, in a way of union; And (such of us as are Ministers,) to preach up, and to practise a mutual forbearance and toleration in all things, *that may consist with the fundamentalls of Religion, with the power of Godlinesse, and with that peace which Christ hath established in his Church*, but to make ruptures in the body of Christ, and to divide Church from Church, and to set up Church against Church, and to gather Churches out of true Churches: And because we differ in some things, therefore to hold Church-communion in Nothing; this we think hath no warrant out of the Word of God, and will introduce all manner of confusion in Churches and Families; and not only disturb, but in a little time destroy the power of Godlinesse, purity of Religion, peace of Christians, and set open a wide gap to bring in Atheisme, Popery, Heresie, and all manner of wickedness: We will therefore conclude with that description that Doctor *Ames* gives of the sinfulnesse and mischievousnesse of Schisme, lib. 5. cap. 12.

Schisme, properly so called, is a most grievous sin;

1. Because it is *against charity towards our Neighbour*, &c.

2. Because it is *against the Edification of him who makes the separation, in that he deprives himself of Communion in Spirituall good.*

3. *Because it is against the honour of Christ, in that, as much as in it lyeth, it takes away the Unity of his mysticall body.*

4. *It makes way unto Heresie, and separation from Christ.* And therefore it is a sin by all good men to be abhorred.

Schisma propriè dictum est peccatum gravissimum:
1 *Quia adversatur charitati erga proximum, & privat eum spirituali bono.*
2 *Adversatur edificationi illius qui facit separationem, quatenus privat semetipsum Communione in bono spirituali.*
3 *Adversatur Christo, quatenus unitatem corporis ejus mystici suo modo tollit.*
4 *Viam facit ad hæresin & separationem à Christo.*

Second sort of Separatists.

2. The second sort are such, as *separate from our Churches, as false Churches*; And from our *Ministry, as Antichristian:* and differ from us not only in Discipline, but in Doctrine also. We purpose not to undertake a particular confutation of your Errours.

Four things only we have to say:

1. To beseech you to consider, whether you did not receive the *work of Conversion from sin unto God, which ye presume to be wrought in you first of all, in these publique assemblies, from which you now separate?* And if once you found Christ walking amongst us, How is it that you do now leave us? Do you not therein leave Christ also? Are we lesse, and not rather more reformed then we were? If the presence of Christ, both of his power and grace, be with us, why will you deny us your presence? Are ye holier and wiser then Christ? Is not this an evident token that we are true Churches, and have a true Ministry, because we have the seal of our Ministry, even the conversion of many sons and daughters unto God? Doth not the Apostle from this very ground, argue the truth of his Apostleship? Is it not apparent, that our Ministers are sent by God, Because their Embassage is made successfull by God, for the good of souls? Did you ever read of true conversion ordinarily in a false Church? Will the Lord concur with those Ministers whom he sends not? Doth not the Prophet seem to say the quite contrary, *Ier.*23.33. And therefore either renounce your conversion, or be converted from that great sin of separating from us.

1 Cor.9.2.

2. To consider, whether there was not a time, *when ye could have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to those Ministers, whose eyes you would now pluck out, and whom now you hate, and think you do God good service,*

in

in reviling and perſecuting them. How is it, that you are thus altered and changed? *Are they become your enemies, becauſe they tell you the truth?* You will Reply, It is becauſe they are *Miniſters Ordained by Antichriſtian Biſhops*; and therefore before they have renounced their falſe Miniſtry, we cannot with a ſafe conſcience hear them, nor expect a bleſſing from their Miniſtry. This Reply is, we confeſs, a great ſtumbling block to many godly people, in this Kingdome; for ſatisfaction to it, we offer theſe particulars:

1. Many of you that make this Reply, hold, *That the Election of the people is by Gods Word ſufficient to make a man a true Miniſter without Ordination.*

Now it is certain, that many publique Miniſters have been choſen by the free and full conſent of their Congregations; and moſt of them have had an after conſent, which was ſufficient to make *Leah Jacobs* wife, and why not (to uſe your own words) to marry a man to a people; and therefore according to your own judgments, all ſuch are lawfull Miniſters. For ſinfull ſuperadditions do not nullifie divine Inſtitutions.

Subſequens conſenſus Jacobi *in* Leam *fecit eos conjuges.* Pareus, *&c.*

2. Some of you, that beſides Election, require Ordination for the making of a Miniſter, yet ſay, that this Ordination muſt be by the people of the Congregation; and thus are your Miniſters ordained.

Now we finde neither precept nor preſident for this in all the Scripture; we finde *Ordination by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, but never of the laying on of the hands of the people. We finde the Apoſtles, *Timothy* and *Titus, Ordaining*, but never the people *Ordaining*; and for private perſons to aſſume the power of Ordination (that is, a power to ſend men to preach the Goſpel, and adminiſter the Sacraments) is a ſin like un-

1 Tim. 4. 14. Act. 14. 23. 1 Tim. 5. 22. Tit. 1. 5.

to the sin of *Uzzah*, and of *Corah*, and his company. Therefore we say to you, as Christ doth, *Matth. 6. First pluck the beam out of thine own eye, and then*, &c. First justifie the Ordination of your own Ministers by private persons, and then you will see better, to find fault with the Ordination of our Ministers.

3. We distinguish between a defective Ministry, and a false Ministry, as we do between a man that is lame or blind, and a man that is but the picture of a man. We do not deny, but that the way of Ministers entring into the Ministry by the Bishops, had many defects in it, for which they ought to be humbled: But we add, that notwithstanding all the accidental corruptions, yet it is not substantially and essentially corrupted: As it is with Baptism in the Popish Church; all Orthodox Divines account it valid, though mingled with much dross, because the party baptized, is *baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* And therefore, when a Papist turns Protestant, he is not baptized again, because the substance of Baptisme is preserved in Popery under many defects. The like, and much more, may be said for the *Ordination of our Ministers by Bishops*: It is lawful and valid for the substance of it, though mingled with many circumstantial defects.

And this appears,

1. Because when they were ordained, *they were designed to no other Office, but to preach the Word, and administer the Sacraments, according to the Will of Christ.*

2. Because since their Ordination, *God hath sealed the truth of their Ministry* (as hath been said) *by his blessing upon it.* If they be *Antichristian Ministers*, how is your *conversion Christian?*

3. Because they were ordained by Bishops, not as Lord

Lord Bishops, or as *a superiour Order by divine Right above a Presbyter*; but as they were *Presbyters*. For the understanding of which, you must know,

1. That by Scripture, a Bishop and Presbyter is all one; as appears by *Act.* 20.17,28. *Tit.* 1.5,6,7,8. *Phil.* 1.1. 1 *Tim.* 3.1,2,&c. 1 *Pet.* 5.1,2. and by what is said by the Authors quoted in the [a] Margent.

2. *That the Lordly Dignities of Bishops were meer civill additaments annexed to their Bishopricks by Kingly favour.*

3. That this Opinion, that *Bishops are a* [b] *superiour Order of Ministry, by Divine Right above a Presbyter, is a late upstart Opinion, contrary to antiquity*, as appears by the Authors quoted in the Margent.

4. That the Laws of this Realm do account nothing *divine* in a Bishop, but his being a Presbyter; and therefore the Parliament in their *Ordinance for Ordination*, tels us, *That they did ordain as Presbyters, not as Bishops, much lesse as Lord Bishops.*

As for their usurpation of the sole power of Jurisdiction, together with their Lordly Titles & Dignities, and Dependances, we have renounced them in our *Solemn League and Covenant*: But we never did, nor never shall renounce them as *Presbyters*, which by the consent of all sides, are by *Divine Right.*

We shall add one thing more,

4. That Ministers do not receive their Ministry from the People, or Bishops, but immediatly from Jesus Christ: For they are Ministers and Embassadors of Christ, not of the People: Indeed they are Embassadors for the good of the People, but not Embassadors of the People: All that the people or Bishop doth, is but to *choose* and *ordain* a man; but it is Christ that gives him his *power and authority*: As when a wife *chooseth a husband*,

a Smectymnuus. *The answer of Mr.* Marshal, *Mr.* Vines, *Mr.* Carol, *Mr.* Seaman, returned to the late King, in the Treaty at the Isle of Wight.

b Ambros. in cap. 4. ad Ephes. & in 1 Tim. 3. Hier. in Tit. 1. & ad Evagrium. Aug. epist. 19. Chrys. in 1 Tim. 3.

husband, and a Town a Mayor; the Town doth not give the Mayor, nor the wife the husband, the power they have; but the *Laws of God*, the one and of *Man*, the other: So it is here, It is Christ that gives the Office, and the Call to the Ministry; They are his *Servants*, and in his *Name* execute their function. It is he that fits them with ability for their work; the people they consent, and the *Bishop as a Presbyter, with other Presbyters, ordain him*; which though it had many Corruptions mingled with it, when the *Bishop* was in all his pomp and Lordliness, yet for the substance of it, it was lawful & warrantable, and *therefore cannot without sin be renounced and abjured.*

3. In the third place we exhott you to consider, *whether since you have forsaken our Congregations, you have not fallen into such strange opinions, and those of so high a nature, as that if any man should have told you seven years ago, that you would have one time or another fall into them, you would have said to him, as* Hazael *did to the Prophet; Am I a dog, that I should do this?* Who would ever have thought, that you that did once sigh, mourn, and bitterly complain, *That a Chappell was permitted to the Queen to hear Masse in, should now plead for a toleration of Popery, and all manner of Errours and Heresies? That you that did once flock to our Churches as Doves to the windows, should now not only forsake ours, but all Churches of whatever constitution, That you that did once so much prize Christ, and his holy Scriptures, should now (some of you at least) deny the Divinity of Christ, and his holy Scriptures?* But this is no great wonder, for the Apostle hath foretold it, *That evill men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*; and that *they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a Canker*, &c. *Errour* is of an incroaching nature; as the *little Theef*

2 Tim 3.13.

2 Tim.2.16, 17.

openeth

openeth the *door* oftentimes to the *great Theef* so a little *errour* paves a cause-way to a greater: The *Popish superstition* at first grew secretly, the *tares* were hidden under the *corn*; but in a little while the *tares* grew up, so as no *corn* could be seen: Images, at first were brought into the Church *only for an historicall use*; afterwards, to stir up *devotion*, at last, they came to be *worshipped*: Let the Serpent but winde in his head, & he will quickly bring in his whole body: Your *first errour* was in *separating from our Churches*, from which *Christ doth not separate*. Here the *Serpent got in his head*, & no wonder his whole body *followed*; he that saith *yea* to the Devil in a little, shall not say *nay* when he please: He that tumbleth down the *Hill of Error*, will never leave tumbling, till he comes to the *bottome*. First you deny our Ministers to be true Ministers, and our Ordinances to be true Ordinances; and then God, as a just Judge, gives you over, in a little time, to deny all *Ministers and Ordinances*, and then to be *above all Ministers and Ordinances*; and at last, to be above Christ himself, and not to stand in need of his *mediation to God the Father*. First you deny *Baptisme of Infants*, and then after, *Baptisme of water*: In a word, First *you run away from us*, and then for the most part turn *Independents*, then *Antinomians*, then *Anabaptists*, then *Arminians*, then some of you *Socinians*, *Antiscripturists*, *Anti-Trinitarians*, still waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; & in the conclusion, meer *Atheists*.

Suffer us therefore to speak to you in the words of Christ, to the Church of *Ephesus*, Rev. 2. 5. *Remember from whence you are faln, and repent, and do your first works*, &c. Repent of all your Soul-destroying *Errours*, and return to the Churches from which ye have most unjustly separated, for fear, lest *God as a just Judge*, because

you

you would not receive the love of the truth that you might be saved, should still give you over to strong delusions, that ye should believe a lye, *That all they might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse:* And this makes way to the fourth thing we have to say to you; and that is,

4. To beseech you to consider, *Whether since you forsook our Congregations, you are not much decayed in the power of Godlinesse,* whether you have not lost your first love to Godly Ministers, Gospel-Ordinances, Fastings, reading the Word, private & Family prayers, and Communion of Saints; whether you are not grown more censorious, self-conceited, headie, high-minded, treacherous, fierce, despisers of those that are good, and lovers of pleasure, more then lovers of God; whether Duties to God and Man have not been more neglected, Sabbaths more prophaned, Families worse governed; the publique welfare of Church and State have not been less minded; whether prophaneness, or prophane Ones, have not been more indulged; and whether you be not sensibly and dangerously apostatized from that close and humble walking with God, which formerly some of you did so much labour after: For the truth is, *Corruption in the Judgment, will quickly bring corruption in the conversation.* Our actions are guided by our apprehensions; and if our apprehensions be *erroneous*, our *actions* will quickly be tainted with wickedness; And therefore it is very obseaveable, *That in the old Law, when the Leprosie was in the head, the Priest was not only to pronounce the man unclean, but utterly unclean:* For Leprosie in the head, will quickly beget a Leprosie in the whole man: As the Sun is to the World; so is the Understanding to Man: If the Sun be dark, all the world is in darkness;

Levit. 13. 14.

and

and if the light that is in thee (saith Christ) be darkness, *How great is that darkness?* We wonder not at the *looseness* of your practices, when we consider the *looseness* of your principles: *For Doctrines contrary to Godliness, must needs bring forth a conversation contrary to the Gospell.* And this is an evident token to us, that the *New-Lights* (as they are called) which you hold forth to the world, proceed not from the *Father of Lights*, but the *Prince of Darkness*, because they lead men into the *Works of Darkness.*

Therefore seeing that since your departure from us, you have wofully back-slidden from God, and are visibly decaid in Holiness and Righteousness, Our Exhortation to you is, that you would return to your first Principles; for then it was better with you, then now; And our prayer to God for you is, *That he would give you repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that you may recover your selves out of the snare of the Devill, who are taken captive by his will.*

Having finished that we had to say to those that separate from our Church, we now go on to speak a few words to those that *continue with us still, and that wait upon the publique Ministry, but do not yet joyn with us, in partaking of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.* These we shall divide into three ranks.

1. Such as are *young people*, not yet sufficiently instructed in the grounds of Religion.

2. Such as are *grown in years*, and come to our Churches, but yet are scandalous in life and conversation.

3. Such as live, for ought we know, unblameably, but yet refuse to come to the Sacrament in the Presbyterian way.

1. Such as are *young people*, and not yet sufficiently instructed in the grounds of Religion; Our Exhortation to you is, *That you would remember your Creator in the days of your Youth*; the word in the Hebrew is, in the choyce of thy dayes: The time of Youth is the Golden Age; and grace in Youth, is like a Jewel in a gold-ring. The time of Youth, it is the *Seasoning Age*: A Vessell will of a long time retain the savour of that liquor that it is first seasoned withall; *Teach a child* (saith Solomon) *the trade of his way, and he will not depart from it when he is old.* The time of Youth is the chiefe time you have to *work for heaven.* Old age is a time to *spend grace*; but Youth is the time to get it: Old Age is the time to *reap* the fruit of holiness, but Youth is the time to *sow* the seed of it: And it is a time, that of all times God doth most require, and most delight in. It is observed by one, that Christ *loved his youngest Disciple best*: And by Another, that Christ was *wonderfully delighted* with that *Hosanna* that the children sang unto him, Mat. 21. 16. *The childrens Hosanna pleased him no less then the mens Hallelujahs*; *Suffer little children to come unto me*, saith Christ, *for to them belongeth the Kingdome of God.* In the Old Testament God hath manifested a great deal of love to young people; He chose *Abel*, the younger, *Shem*, the younger, *Abraham*, the younger, *Jacob*, the younger; young *Samuel*, and young *David*, and young *Josiah*: And therefore let young men, especially, be exhorted to begin betimes, to bear the yoak of the Lord; *Seek ye first the Kingdome of God, and his Righteousnes*; first, *before* any thing else; and first, *more* then any other thing. Say not, (O say not!) I am a young man, and therefore may plead for liberty to do what I list, till I come of riper years: But remember, *That Jesus Christ*

בחרותיך

Discipulum minimum Iesus amavit plurimùm, Hieron.

Non minus placet Deo Hosanna puerorum, quàm Hallelujah virorum, Dr. Andrews *in his Preface to the Command.*

Christ shed his blood for thee when he was 8. *dayes old*; and took thee into his Family by *Baptisme*, *when thou didst hang upon thy mothers Breast*; Thou art (it may be) a young man, but a Baptized young-man; A Young-man consecrated and dedicated to God; And it is not only sin, but sacriledg and perjury, to *impropriate that that is dedicated to God, to the service of the Devill.* Remember the wrath manifested from Heaven *against the* 42. *children* that mocked *Elisha*; And remember further, That young people must dye, as well as old: *There are Skulls in Golgotha, of all sizes*; and young people have *immortall souls*, and must appear at the great day of Judgment, as well as *old*; Young people are by nature *children of wrath, heires of hell*; and therefore this is thy first work (*O young man*) to get out of the Root of Abomination, into the Root of Acceptation; out of the old *Adam*, into the new *Adam*; & before this be done, (though thou shouldst spend thy time in gathering up Pearls and Jewels,) thou art an undone creature.

For the better effecting of this, we exhort you, to attend diligently to the publike Preaching of the word, and willingly and cheerfully to submit to be catechized and instructed by your *Parents*, *Masters*, *and Ministers.* The Scripture divideth a Congregation, into him that *catechizeth*, and those that are *catechized*, saying, *Let them that are taught*, or (as it is in the Greek) *Catechized, communicate to him that teacheth* (or *catechizeth*) *them in all good things.* In the Primitive times, when any Heathen man was converted to Christianity, he was first a *catechumenus*, before he was admitted either to *Baptisme*, or the *Lords Supper.* And *Egesippus* testifies, *that by the diligent instruction of the Church, there was no known Common-Wealth in any part of the World, inhabited, but within fourty years after Christs passion, received a great shaking of Heathenish Religion.* There are in Christian Religion, *fundamentalls* and *superstructions.* The *fundamentalls* are the *vitals* of Christianity:

Gal. 6. 6.

Quoted by Dr. *Andrewes*, in his Preface to the Com-

These are comprized in many of our *English* Catechismes. Amongst all others, we do more especially commend the *greater and lesser Catechismes made by the Reverend Assembly of Divines, and published to be used in all Churches in* England *and* Wales, *by Authority of Parliament.* These we exhort you, not only to read, but to learn. And to invite you thereunto, we further declare;

That the study of the Catechisme, is a singular help for the *right understanding* of the Scriptures: (For the Catechisme is nothing else, but a Methodical Extract out of the Bible, of the fundamentals of Christian Religion;) And it is also very useful to make you understand what your *Ministers preach to you*; And to keep you from the *Errours* and *Heresies of these times*, and to prepare you to give a distinct and perfect account of your Faith to the Minister and Elders. For one great Reason why men do so pervert the Scriptures to their own destruction, and run wilde into so many errors and heresies, and are so unable to give a particular and distinct account to the Minister and Elders, is for want of the study of the Catechisme. As a ship *without ballast* is tossed about with every wave and wind; so is a *man without the study of the Catechisme*, carried about with every wind of vain doctrine. As a *house* without a foundation will quickly fall, so will a Christian that is not well verst in the fundamentals of Religion. As Children grow *crooked*, that are not well looked to at first; so many run into *crooked opinions*, because not well catechized.

And therefore we earnestly beseech and intreat all Parents, and Masters of Families, that they would make conscience of this great duty of catechizing their children and servants. And oh that the Lord would make our words to take impression upon your hearts. In the

Old

Old Testament God commands Parents to *teach diligently their children.* The word in the Hebrew is, to *whet the Law* upon their children. The fourth Commandement is directed not to children, and servants, but to Parents and Masters; And they are there commanded, not only *in their own persons*, to keep the Sabbath; but to see that their *children and servants do it also.* It is not, *Thou, or thy son, or thy daughter*; *But thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter* It doth not say, (as *Zanchy* well observes,) *Remember thou to keep holy the Sabbath day, and to perswade thy children and servants to keep it holy:* But *remember thou to keep it holy, and thy son, and thy servant*, implying thereby, *that it is the Duty of the Master and Father, to compell his servant and children to the keeping of the Sabbath day.* For doing of this, God exceedingly extols *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 19. *I know that he will command his children, and his household after him, that they keep the wayes of the Lord:* upon which words, a learned Divine write thus; *Abraham did not leave his children and servants to their own genius, their own counsels, their own lusts, though it is certain, divers of them would have thanked him for such a liberty; for they had been nursed up in superstition and idolatry, as* Abraham *was, and might have pretended, that they were not satisfied in point of conscience. But* Abraham *knew how to distinguish between liberty of conscience, and liberty of lust, and therefore would not allow them such a liberty as would have enticed them into the worst kinde of bondage.* The New Testament also calls upon Parents, not only to bring up their children, but to *nurture them up in instruction and admonition of the Lord.* Old *Eli* was *grievously punished* for neglect of this duty: And let his severe chastisement be as a *warning-piece* to all Fathers and Masters; And let them know, *That if their children and servants perish for want of instruction, through their negligence, their blood will be required at their hands.*

Deut. 6. 7. ושננתם

Zanch. in 4. Præceptum.

Mr. *Cheynell* in a Sermon before the House of Commons.

Ephes. 6. ἐκτρέφετε.

And if Parents and Masters, much more ought Ministers to be very conscientious in the diligent discharge of this duty. Our Saviour Christ layeth an expres com-

mand

mand upon them, not only *to feed the sheep*, *but also the lambs of Christ*. It is no disparagement to a *Peter*, to be a *feeder of Christs lambs*. Oh that Ministers would unanimously and universally set to this duty! We commend it to them, as a most *Soveraign Antidote*, to preserve their Congregations from the errours of these times. It is reported of *Julian*, that amongst other subtile plots he used for the rooting out of Christian Religion; One was the *suppression of all Christian Schools*, and places of catechizing. [a] And as one saith, *If he had not been as a Cloud that soon passeth away, it had been to be feared, lest within a short time he had overshadowed all Religion.* For when Catechizing was taken from the Church, it was presently all overspread with ignorance. And it is further added by the same Author, That the Papists themselves acknowledg, that all the advantage the Protestants got of them in the beginning of Reformation, was by their catechizing; because they began sooner to catechize, then they did. And it is to be feared, saith he, if ever the Papists get once again advantage of Us, it will be by their exacter catechizing, then ours. And therefore, if ever you would prevent the further *corruption* of mens Judgments, and secure them from the infection of *errour*, and preserve Religion from ruine, We exhort you in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, to practise this duty; and intreat our people with all readiness and constancie, to submit unto this Ordinance of God, which with so much publique prejudice, hath been so long neglected.

[a] Dr. *Andrews* in the forementioned Preface.

And to perswade people thereunto, let them consider further,

1. If Ministers are bound to catechize, then people are bound to be catechized.

2. As

2. That they are baptized, and thereby consecrated unto Christ, and obliged by promise, to give up themselves unto instruction.

3. That ignorance, though it be not the greatest, yet it is a most dangerous sin: All sin is wrapt up in ignorance, as a child in swadling clouts. The Scripture saith, *That Christ will come in flaming fire to render vengeance upon all those that know him not*, &c. 2 Thess. 1. 8.

It makes the *ignorance of God* to be the cause of all sin, 1 *Sam.* 2.12. 1 *Joh.*2.4. *Eph.*4.19. And *David* prayeth unto God, *To pour out his wrath upon the heathen that know him not*; how much more upon the Christians that know him not? As toads and Serpents grow in dark and dirty sellars: so all sin and wickedness in an ignorant and blind soul. Now there is no ordinary way for young people to gain the knowledge of God, but by *Catechizing*. Psal.79.6.

4. That the time of youth is the *golden age*, the *seasoning age*, and a time in which men are apt to receive abiding impressions of evil, or good. And if they can learn to say to *Elisha*, *Baldpate*, why should they be unwilling to learn to sing to Christ, *Hosanna?*

5. That it is not so great a shame for young people to be ignorant, as to be wilful and obstinate in ignorance. And if they refuse to be *Catechized*, they shall perish in their ignorance; but the *Minister* is free from the blood of their souls.

The second sort are such *as live within the bounds of our Province, and come to our Congregations, and yet are wicked and prophane, and such, as if they should come to be examined by the Minister and Elders, would not be received to the Sacrament.* These are Christians in *name*, but they are a shame to the *name*, and bear it (as *Urijah* did a letter to *Joab*) *for their ruine and destruction.* We beseech and intreat them to consider, what a sinful and cursed condition it is to live ungodlily and unrighteously under the abundance of Gospel-Ordinances.

First, what a *sinful condition* it is; For,

1. It is as much as in them lyes, a frustrating of the great

great love of Christ in dying for them: For, therefore Christ dyed, *that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which dyed for them, and rose again*, 2 Cor. 5. 13.

2. It is a frustrating of the gracious design of God, in sending the Gospel to them; for one chief errand of the Gospel, is to *teach us to deny ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*, Tit. 2. 12.

3. It is not only to sin against the *light of nature*, but against the *light of the Gospel*.

4. Not only against the *creating and preserving mercies of God*, but against the *heart-blood mercy* of Jesus Christ.

5. It is a sin of *horrible ingratitude and unthankfulness*; a sin that makes God himself to stand, as it were, amazed, that any man should be so wicked, as to be guilty of it, *Isai.* 1. 2. *Jer.* 2. 11, 12.

6. It is a sin that will make us speechlesse, and unexcusable at the great day, *Joh.* 15. 22.

7. It is a sin that renders a Christian worse then the very bruit creatures, *Isa.* 1. 3. And in this one sense, worse then the Devills themselves, because the Devills never refused so great salvation.

2. Consider what a cursed condition this is: For,

1. It is a *spirituall plague*, which is so much greater then a corporal, by how much the Soul is better then the Body.

2. It is a sign not only of Gods Fatherly, but revengeful displeasure, *a brand of reprobation, and the high-way to damnation*.

3. It renders a man utterly uncapable (as such) of the Sacrament of the body and bloud of Christ; so

Jid

ordained the Sacrament for his friends, not for his enemies; to increase, not beget grace; for those that are visible Saints, not for those that are visibly wicked.

4. It brings *Personall, Congregationall,* and *Nationall Judgments,* Luk. 13. 5. Isa. 5.

5. It makes a Christians condition at the day of Judgment more intolerable, then the condition of *Sodom and Gomorrah.* It makes the Gospel it self to be the chiefest inditement against him; and the hottest place in Hell to be his portion for ever, and ever.

Oh that the Lord would give hearts to these men to meditate on these things! and to repent of all their swearing, cursing, lying, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, Sabbath-breaking, and such like abominations! And let them not be offended with us, (as most of them are) for not admitting thē to the Sacrament; but rather offended with their sins, that make them uncapable, as such, of the Sacrament. Let not them cry out against us, but against themselves; and study to be revenged, not of their Ministers and Elders, but of their sins, and themselves. The Lord knows, that it is meer love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and tender pity and compassion to their and our own souls, that forceth us to deny them this Ordinance; lest we should be instrumental to their eating and drinking their own damnation, and accessary to their unworthy receiving, and to the prophanation of the Sacrament; *Let not our pity, love, and care to them, breed hatred against us, in them.* And why should they desire to partake in these holy mysteries, whose hearts and lives are so full of unholinesse? why should they that want spirituall life, desire to eat of spirituall [illegible] What should men spiritually dead, do at a spiri- should they desire to eat that bread,

which will certainly, as long as they continue in this condition, be the bread of death, not of life; and to drink that cup, which will certainly be a cup, not of salvation, but of damnation! Let our counsel be acceptable to you; *First wash you, make ye clean, put away the evill of your doings from before Gods eyes, cease to do evill, learn to do well*; and then come and see whether we will not receive you heartily and joyfully to the Sacrament. *First wash your hands in innocency, and then you will be fit to compasse the Lords Altar.* First get *spirituall life, and then come and eat spirituall food.* First get to be a friend and Disciple of Christ; and then not only We, but Christ himself, will bid you welcome, and make you partakers of all the benefits and comforts of the blessed Sacrament.

The third and last sort, *are such as come to our Congregation, and live* (for ought we know) *unblameably*; and yet refuse to joyn with Us in the Sacrament upon this account; because they will not come to be examined by the Minister and Elders. This (as we find by woful experience) is the great mountain that lyeth in the way, and hindereth the free passage of the Presbyterial-Government; and therefore we have taken some pains in our Vindication for the removing of it; we have shewed,

1. That the Ruling-Elder (which is the Officer so much opposed) hath a Divine Warrant.

2. It is the Will of Jesus Christ, that they that come to the Sacrament, should first submit themselves to Examination; and not only so, but to *Examination by Minister and Elders.*

3. What this Examination is, which is required, and how often it is required.

4. The reason why ancient men and
have formerly under the Prelatical

admitted to the Sacrament, are required to submit unto Examination, before they can be again admitted; It remains, That we give Answers to the Objections that are brought against this way of Examinatiou; but before we do this, we will first offer certain Reasons and Motives (besides those already named) to perswade every one of our respective Congregations, as well old, as young, rich as poor, freely and cheerfully to submit unto it.

The first *Motive*, is *from the evident necessity of it, especially now, while we are reforming the promiscuous admission of all sorts of people to the Lords Table, formerly so scandalous.* Motive 1.

And this appears; because,

1. Without this, how can *ignorant persons* (*unfit to communicate*) be detected? what other ordinary and regular course can be imagined, to discover who are insufficient in regard of their want of knowledge? And it is most certain, that there are many ignorant persons, old, as well as young, rich, as well as poor, in the most knowing Congregations; and many times, those whom we suppose *to be very skilful in the word of Righteousnesse*, upon *Examination* are found to be *babes in knowledge*.

2. Without this course, multitudes of ignorant persons, both old and young, will intrude themselves, who by reason of their ignorance, being not able to discern the Lords body, must needs *eat and drink Judgment to themselves, and become guilty of the body and blood of Christ*, 1 Cor. 11. 27, 29.

3. Without this, how shall Ministers and Elders ever [illegible] to know the [illegible] *state* of their Congre- [illegible] them in the Lord? [illegible] egation give an account

count of their Faith to the Elderſhip, as well as any one, the people will be extreamly apt to object unto the *Miniſter and Elders*, partial-dealing in this particular, which is contrary to that heavy charge of the Apoſtle, *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Elect Angels; that thou obſerve theſe things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.* And it will breed *diſcontents* and *animoſities* in the people againſt the Elderſhip, and great *diviſions* and *diſſentions* among themſelves.

1 Tim. 5. 21.

5. This courſe ſhould be ſubmitted to by the moſt intelligent and knowing Chriſtians in a Congregation, that by their *good example*, and *profeſſed ſubjection* to the Government of Chriſt, thoſe that have not ſo great a meaſure of knowledge, and ſo have more need to come, may more readily and effectually be perſwaded to do the ſame.

6. Finally, how can the *Miniſters and Elders*, intruſted by God with the *Overſight of their flock*, keep themſelves pure from the ſin of thoſe Perſons, who through ignorance cannot chuſe but prophane the Lords Supper; unleſs by this means, they uſe their beſt endeavors to finde out where ignorance is, and to remove it: And it is their duty to *keep themſelves pure, and not to be partakers of other mens ſins.*

Motive 2. The ſecond motive, is from the *great profit and benefit that will redound to our reſpective Congregations, from this practice, prudently and faithfully undertaken, and univerſally ſubmitted unto.* For,

1. Hereby the whole Congregation, in all the members of it, ſhall receive m[illegible] vantage and [illegible] whileſt thoſe that a[illegible] thoſe that are *weak*

ened in knowledg; and those that are *ignorant*, put into a way of gaining knowledge, and so be prepared to partake of the Ordinance of the Lords Supper, more conscionably; and more comfortably discern the Lords body, which is done by *knowledge*; as well as by *Faith*, 1 *Cor.*11.29.

2. Hereby the great offence of promiscuous, or mixt communion, will be prevented, which hath been heretofore, and is to this day, a great grief to the godly, both Ministers and people; and which hath been, and is daily objected against us, by them that separate from our Churches, as the ground why they are necessitated to depart from us; and are still discouraged from returning to us.

3. Hereby a *good foundation* will be laid, of carrying on that *reall reformation* which we have *covenanted for*, both in Congregations, families, and particular persons; *growth in knowledge* being a great means to further *our growth in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet.3.18.

4. Hereby those uncomfortable and disorderly fractions and divisions among the members of our severall Congregations, (some refusing to submit to all orders, while others christianly submit themselves,) wil in good measure be *cured*, and our Congregations to the *glory of God*, and the comfort of *Minister, and Elders*, be reduced to a sweet Harmonious *unity and uniformity*, not only in judgment, but in practice, both thinking and doing the same thing; which were a *Gospel-blessing* much to be desired, as a fruit of that Ancient Promise, *Jer.*32.39.

The third Motive is from the *Mischiefs that will inevit-* Motive 3.
upon the neglect of [illegible] *practice*. For hereby,
[illegible] *persons* [illegible] their ignorance un-

2. The

2. The *Lords Supper* in many Congregations will be wholly disused, or miserably prophaned. 3. Particular Congregations will be filled with distractions and discontents, whilest a great part among them refuse to walk orderly. 4. The *Ministers and Elders*, who sincerely tender the spiritual welfare of their Congregations, will be much *discouraged* and *discomforted*. 5. The *Work of Reformation*, and particularly the growth of people in knowledg and the grace of Jesus Christ, will extreamly be obstructed and hindered; *and whosoever shall be any cause or occasion thereof, will but uncomfortably answer it unto Jesus Christ.*

Motive 4. The fourth Motive, is from the *weakness and insufficiency* of the objections that are brought against this practice; To which we shall now (God assisting us) return *distinct*, and we hope, *satisfactory* Answers.

The Objections are:

Object. 1. Many who are well inclined, object their own *timorousnes*: And have *jealousies* that the Minister will propound such hard and unusual questions, as they shall not on a sudden be able to answer.

Answ. 1. The Questions to be propounded by the Eldership to persons, before they come to the Lords Table, are for the substance of them contained in the *Ordinance of Parliament*, of the 20th of *October*, 1643. the particulars thereof being the *fundamentalls of Religion*, contained usually in most *Catechismes*, which persons of the meanest capacity ought to understand.

2. We doubt not but the *Ministers with the Elders*, will make it their serious Endeavours, to deal with all persons in all *Prudence, meekness, tenderness, and love*, as the condition of those that come before them shall require; They being not insensible of their own *weakness*, will take heed of Discouraging the meanest, or Quenching the smoaking flax, well knowing, *That they are not to Lord it over Gods heritage, but to promote their growth, and to be Helpers of their joy.*

Object. 2. Why may not people be now admitted to the Sacrament, without examination, as well as before the Elders were chos-

Answ. 2. Because; 1. Before re chosen, and th-
of Church-Govern-
land was in *point o*
dition: But now

And we have in our *Nationall Covenant*, *sworn to endeavour a reformation in Church-Government, according to the Word of God.* In pursuance of that Covenant, there are many Ordinances of Parliament, to require it; and accordingly it is practised in many Congregations; and *shall we still persist in our old unreformed way?*

2. The *Promiscuous admission* of all sorts of Persons heretofore without examination tended much to the *Prophanation of the Lord Supper*, and was a great *scandall* in our Church, *Hazarded* the souls of thousands, *occasioned* separations from our Churches, brought the judgments of God upon the *Kingdome*, and was no small griefe to godly Ministers, &c. But now God having provided a further Remedy, we ought not only, not to *oppose it*, but to *submit* to it, with all readiness and thankfulness.

Will you have the *Ancient men of a Congregation, that have for divers years been partakers of the Sacrament, come now in their Old Age to be Examined; will you have Noblemen, and Rich men, and Aldermen*, &c. *Object.* 3.

We have formerly declared, That the Presbyteriall Government doth not precisely require of those that come to the Sacrament, *That they should first be Examined by Questions and Answers: But if any man shall make a good profession of his Faith, in a continued discourse, without being asked any Questions, it will be accepted, as well as if they were Examined by particular Questions.* *Answ.* 1.

2. We have likewise shewed the Reason why Ancient men and women, that have formerly been admitted, are required to submit to Examination, before they can be again admitted, &c. We have intreated you, to distinguish between a *Church-reforming in Discipline, and reformed*: When a Church is once reformed, members admitted by [illegible] examination of the Eldership, [illegible] any neces[illegible] afterwards to Mi[illegible] be in case of ex[illegible] as ours is, when [illegible] sort

sorts have formerly been admitted, without any Distinction, then *Old men* must be willing to give an account, as well as *young men*, and *rich men*, as well as *poor*: Because,

1. Old men and rich men are found to be *ignorant*, and to prophane the Sacrament, as well as *young men*, and *poor men*.

2. In Gospell-administrations God is no respecter of persons; neither must his Officers be, if they would be found faithfull in their places; *It is not gray hairs, nor silken coats; but knowledg, faith, repentance, love and thankefulness, will qualifie a man for the Sacrament.*

3. If old men and rich men are more gracious and knowing, then others; their good examples will be mighty incouragements, to draw on the younger, and poorer sort. And wherein can *Noblemen, and Richmen, expresse their thankfulness to God, for his distinguishing mercies towards them, better, then in becoming patterns and presidents to others, in their ready obedience to the will of Christ*, in this particular?

Object. 4. We are willing to come to the *Minister alone*, to be examined; But we will never come before the *Ruling-Elders*.

Answ. 1. The Office of the *Ruling Elders*, as they are distinct from *teaching Elders*, is grounded upon Scripture; and is not an invention of man, but an *Ordinance of Christ*, (as we have shewed,) and therefore to be submitted unto.

2. Admission of members to the Sacrament, is an act of Church-Government, and therefore belongs to the Elders, as well as the Minister: (as we have likewise shewed.) *Church-Government is not committed by Christ unto Ministers severally, but, to Ministers and Elders jointly*, Matth. 10. 17. 1 Cor. [illegible] 28. 1 Tim. 5. [illegible] 12. Act. 15 6. [illegible] And th[illegible] ence, people [illegible] ders.

3. This is a Practice according to the example of the *best reformed Churches*, wherein Elders are joyned with Ministers in this particular.

4. To devolve this work upon one Minister alone, as it is sinful, so it will prove very *prejudicial*, both to Minister and People: For in some places *Ministers* may not be so faithfull and Prudentiall as they ought to be, and may, *through pride, covetousnes, partiality, or rashnes*, keep from the Sacrament, or admit to the Sacrament, whom Christ would not have admitted, or kept away. And in other places, where *Ministers* are more *wise*, and *humble*, and *faithfull*, if they should assume the power of Examination, without *Elders* assisting of them, they will be wofully *mis-reported* and scandalized by those that come before them, or by others, that are disaffected to them; For if such horrid and base reports are already raised about the Questions propounded by the Minister and Elders, when they sit together; (as by sad experience these wicked dayes of ours will witnesse:) what will not ungodly men be afraid to report, when the Minister alone shall ingross this power?

5. We have formerly shewed, that these Elders whom you so much oppose, are such *as you either have, or might have chosen; and they were chosen for the relief and benefit of the Congregation, that so the Minister might not be sole judge of those that come to the Sacrament, but might have others joyned with him, to see that he doth nothing out of envy, malice, pride, or partiality; but that all things may be managed for the good and edification of those for whose sake they* [illegible] And therefore it is a wonder to us, to hear [illegible] *ing-Elders*, when they [illegible] *ief and benefit.*

[illegible] at when the Par-

[illegible] liam-

liament gave their allowance to the Presbyterial Government, if they had put the whole *juridical power* of the Church, into the hands of one Minister alone, they that now seem so willing to come to be examined by the Minister, without his Elders, would have more bitterly declaimed against that way, then now they do against this: For this indeed were to make every Minister a *Prelate* in his Congregation; and to bring in that, which hath some Resemblance to *Auricular confession.*

Object. 5. Though some *Ministers rigidly keep all from the Sacrament, that will not come before the Eldership; yet there are others that are Presbyterians, and have Elders chosen, that examine without them, and will receive us to the Sacrament, without coming before them.*

In answer to this,

Answ. 1. We doubt whether there be any *Ministers* of the Presbyterian judgment, that do thus practise.

2. If there be any such, we conceive that herein they act not only contrary to an *Ordinance of Parliament*, but to an *Ordinance of Christ*, who hath given the power of Discipline, not to *one Minister*, (as we have said) but to an *united company of Presbyters:* And for one Minister to assume this power unto himself, is (as we have also declared) *to make himself the whole Church; It is to build up what he hath destroyed, and to usurp the Prelaticall power of sole jurisdiction, in his Congregation.* For he doth not only assume a Pastoral power of instructing those that are to come to the Sacrament, but an Authoritative power of admitting to, & keeping from the Sacrament; which is to take to himself an authority th[illegible] never given him. And [illegible] these
sider what we ha[illegible]
ntable by the W[illegible]

whole power of ſuſpending perſons from the Sacrament, who have been du'y admitted thereunto, as it is to aſſume the whole power of admitting to the Sacrament, &c. And further we beſeech and intreat them (if there be any ſuch,) to conſider what an offence they give in this particular, to all their Brethren in the Miniſtry; and what an argument they put into the mouthes of thoſe that are diſaffected to the government; and in the fear of God to forſake this way and courſe, leſt while they think *to build with us, they be found to be deſtroyers, both of the Presbyterian Government and Miniſtry, and to open a wide door to Sacramental Prophanation.*

Doth not the Scripture ſay, *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat?* &c. but it no where ſaith, Let a man be examined by the Miniſter and Elders. *Object.6.*

1. The text ſpeaks of thoſe that were formerly admitted in a due way to the Sacrament; and of ſuch it is only required, that they ſhould *examine themſelves*: For the Examining of thoſe amongſt us that have formerly bin admitted, is occaſioned by the great Church deformation that hath been amongſt us; which being once healed, there will not be again that need afterwards of *Church-Examination.* *Anſw.*

2. The Apoſtles words are not to be underſtood *reſtrictively and excluſively.* For he doth not ſay, Let a man examine himſelf *only*, But let a man *Examine himſelf*, that is, Let him *eſpecially examine himſelf.* Take a parallel text, Rom.14.12. *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God*; which text is not to be [illegible] excluſively; For it is certain, that Miniſters [illegible] only of themſelves, [illegible] and Maſters, for [illegible] re, Let a man exam-

examine himself: This doth not exclude the duty of a father, in examining his children; or of a Master, Minister, or Elder, in examining those under his Charge: But it teacheth us, That we must not rest in, nor trust to the Examination of our Father, Master, Minister, or Elders, but likewise examine our selves: *If a childe, or servant should say unto his father, or master, when he is examined about his knowledge, or faith, The Scripture bids me examine my self, and therefore I will not be examined by you. Would not this be accounted a great affront, and an unsufferable abuse to the holy Scriptures?* and yet just so do they reason & argue, that from this Scripture, would exempt themselves from all examination by Minister & Elders. And so likewise when Christ saith, Matth. 7.1. *Judge not, that you be not judged*: He that should interpret that text *exclusively*, of all kind of judging; would overthrow all Magistracy. But it is to be understood only, as excluding private and rash judging, (when a man judgeth his Brother, and hath no calling to judge him, nor a just cause:) so it is here; This text excludes all private Christians from examining others; but to say, that it excludes all men in office and place in the Church, and in the family, would at once destroy all Church-Government, and all family-government.

3. We might add, that those that are most ready to pretend, that it is needless to give an account before the Minister and Elders, because they are to *examine themselves*, it is to be feared, are as regardless of examining themselves, as unwilling to give an account to the Eldership.

Object. 7. Doth not the Scripture say, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself?* It is no

That text is not to be underſtood *excluſively*, unleſs it relate to cloſe hypocrites: An *hypocrite* eats and drinks damnation to himſelf only; but if it relates to thoſe that are *groſly ignorant and ſcandalous*, it cannot be underſtood excluſively. For when a man that is groſly ignorant and ſcandalous, receives the Sacrament, he not only eats and drinks judgment to himſelf, but the *guilt of the ſin lyeth upon all thoſe that knew of it, and did not do their duty for the hindering of it*, as we have formerly ſhewed. *Anſw.*

There are many *Elders* that are very ignorant, and fiter rather to be *examined*, then to *examine*; and that propound unbeſeeming and abſurd queſtions. *Object.* 8.

The iguorance of ſome Elders doth no more prejudice the office of an Elder, then the ignorance of ſome Phyſitians, or Miniſters, doth the calling of Miniſters and Phyſitians: If ignorant Elders be choſen, the fault is not in the Office, but in the Chooſers. *Anſw.*

2. This objection cannot be juſtly made againſt the Ruling-Elders within this Province; we hope we may ſay without boaſting, that they are very knowing, and very godly; and we are confident, that all the reports, that are vented concerning abſurd and unbeſeeming queſtions, &c. are meer lyes and falſities. In all ſuch meetings, the Miniſter is the Moderator, and he onely propounds the queſtions; the Elders ſit by and judge.

3. In thoſe Pariſhes where there are none ſufficiently qualified to be Elders, the Presbyterian Government doth not require them to chuſe Elders, but Orders, *That all ſuch Pariſhes ſhould be under the immediate care, inſpection, and government of the Claſſical Presbytery.*

It is not enough for a *Miniſter to forewarn his people of the dan-* *Object.* 9.
[illegible] coming to the Lords Supper; and if they will not-
[illegible] warning, come unworthily, is not the Miniſter

[illegible] that he muſt not
[illegible] ſeeth

his child very greedy of it) to give it him; especially, when he knoweth that it will certainly poyson him. It was not enough for old *Eli* to admonish his Sons; but because he did not use his power, in hindring them, he is reproved, as accessary to their sins.

Object. 10. I have *lived thus long, and never yet was examined, and certainly I will not now begin in my old age, I will rather never receive the Sacrament at all.*

Answ. Old Customes are no good principles to build upon; these are times of Reformation.

2. Consider thine own spiritual wants, and what need thou hast of this blessed Ordinance; and remember what the servant of *Naaman* said unto him, *If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith, Wash and be clean?* So give Us leave to say to you, *If Christ had commanded you to do some great thing, would you not have done it, rather then be deprived of this Ordinance? how much rather when he saith to thee only, Come and give an account of thy Faith before the Eldership, and thou shalt be made partaker of this Heavenly banquet?*

Object. 11. But I have made a Vow, that I will never come before the Elders.

Answ. This Vow is rash and sinful, a bond of iniquity; and therefore by keeping of it, you become guilty of a double sin: the Eldership is an Ordinance of Christ (as we have shewed) and therefore not to be vowed against.

Object. 12. I am every way able to examine my self, and none knows what is in my heart; and therefore I will venture upon my own private examination.

Answ. How is it, that thou art unwilling to
estate, without first
advise with Ph
venture

head, without taking the advice of Minister and Elders; *Is thy soul less precious to thee, then thy body, or thy estate?* Besides, if thou hast knowledg, why wilt thou not come to examination; if no knowledg, why wilt thou refuse the way & means to get knowledg? the truth is, the true ground why some men do oppose this way, is either,

1. Out of ignorance and pride; because they are impatient to have their ignorance discovered:

2. Or else, Secondly, it is from a prophane spirit of opposition; not onely against Church-Government, and all good order; but against all the wayes of Christ. But let such persons consider;

1. That it is far better to have their ignorance cured, then covered: Ignorance covered will make us go blindfold to Hell; But Ignorance cured, will make us go with open eyes to Heaven.

2. That Christ accounts them his enemies, that will not have him to *reign over them*, and will destroy them as his enemies. Luk. 19. 14, 27.

3. To hate Instruction and Reformation, is a certain sign of wickedness, which God abhors.

4. All the opposition that carnal and rebellious spirits have against Christ and his wayes, will in the end, prove kicking against the pricks, and most pernicious to their own Souls.

And thus we have answered all those objections, that are usually brought against this way of Examination, and herein (as we hope) have given abundant satisfacti- [illegible] willing to receive it. And we [illegible] tation. As for the suc- [illegible] is having learn't, [illegible] *Paul* ha[illegible]

we will hear thee again of this matter. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed, &c. We doubt not but there are many within the Province; whose hearts *the Lord will open, to attend to what is here said.* Our desire is to do good unto all, even unto those that are our greatest adversaries; and not *to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good.* If they mock at us (as they did at *Paul*) yet surely, *Our Judgment is with the Lord, and our work with our God; He that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is unjust, let him be unjust still:* But we hope better things of you, that have submitted to the Presbyterian-Government. For whom we pray, *That the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our* Lord Jesus Christ, *that great Shepherd of his sheep, through the bloud of the everlasting* Covenant, *would make you perfect in every good work, to do his Will; working in you, that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through* Jesus Christ; *to whom be glory for ever and ever,* Amen.

Isa. 49. 4.

Heb. 13. 19, 20.

Subscribed in the Name, and by the Appointment of the Assembly,

George Walker, Moderator.
Arthur Jackson, *Edmund Calamy*, } Assessors.
Roger Drake, Scriba.
Elidad Blackwell, Scriba.

FINIS.

READER, be pleased to [illegible]
let every one,

John Christie